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THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR

JANUARY 1990

A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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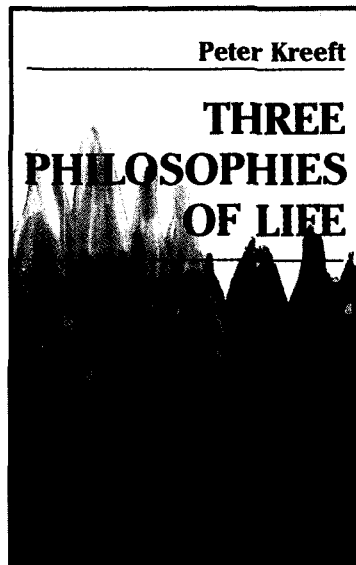
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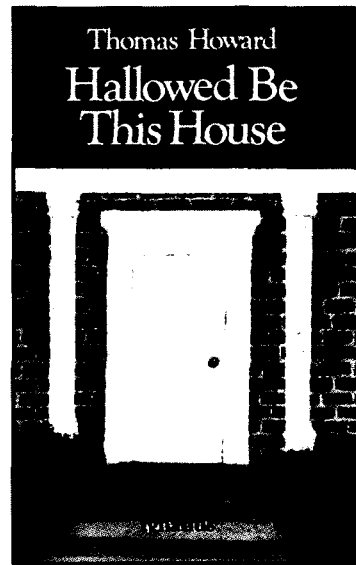
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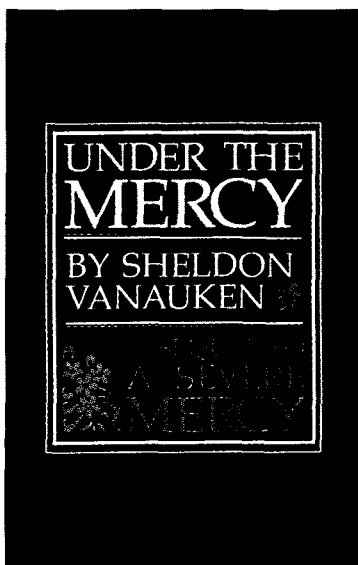
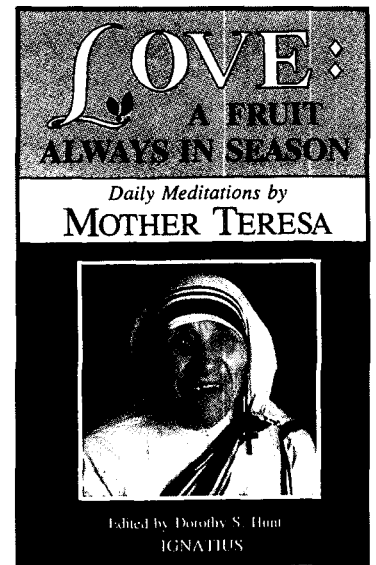
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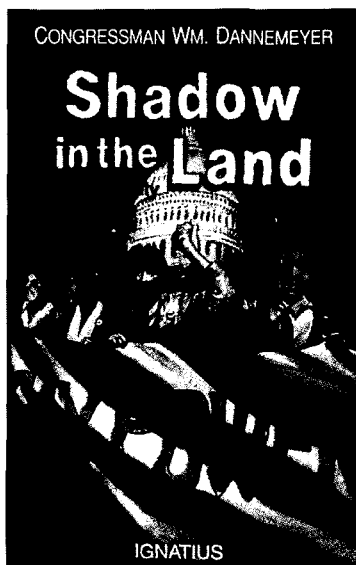


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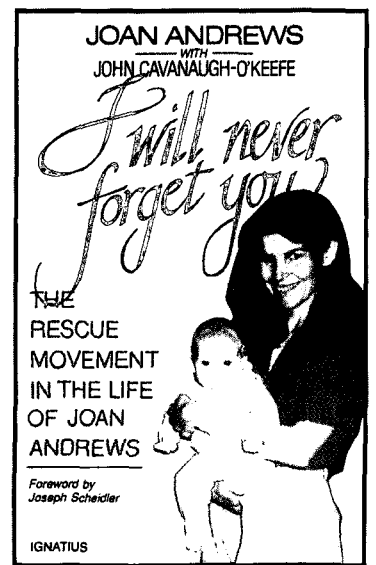
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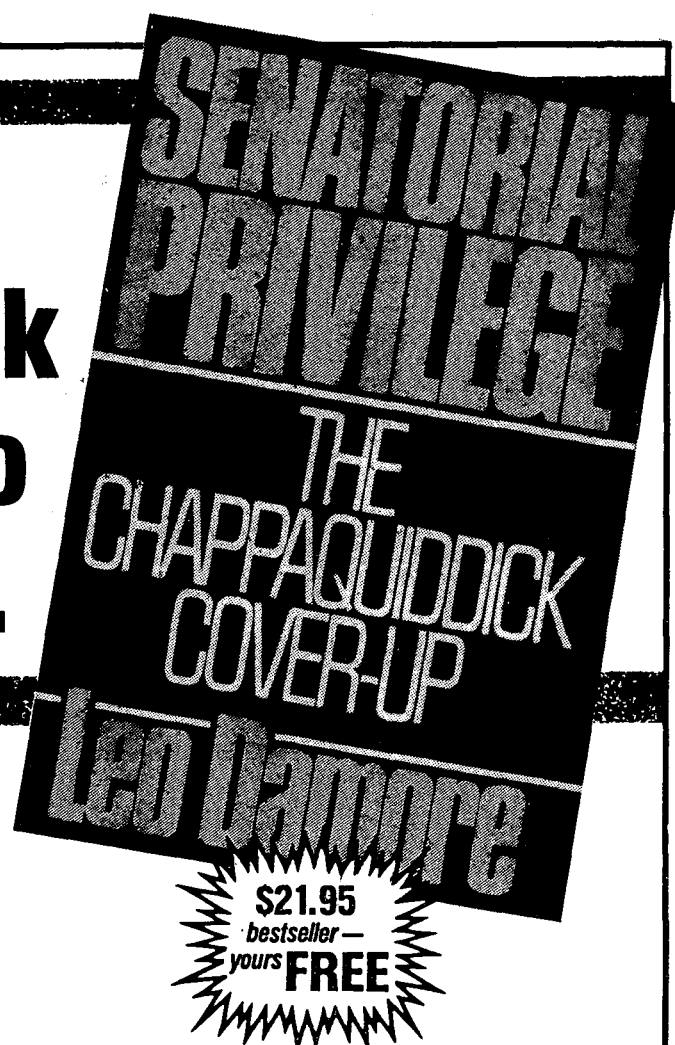
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Despite a media brownout, this book fought its way onto the bestseller lists.

And when you read what it reveals about Teddy and Chappaquiddick, you'll see why.



Ray Kerrison explains it all in his *New York Post* column:

"The biggest surprise — and scandal — of the publishing season is the public's extraordinary demand for a book exposing Sen. Edward Kennedy's fatal escapade at Chappaquiddick, despite a review blackout by the nation's media giants.

This book is titled *Senatorial Privilege: The Chappaquiddick Cover-Up* (Regnery Gateway, \$21.95). Written by Leo Damore, it made the *New York Times* non-fiction best-seller list yesterday for the eighth straight week.

Yet the . . . *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Time* and *Newsweek* have all boycotted it.

The media blackout is all the more suspicious because Damore's account is a meticulous examination of what happened at the bridge and the aftermath. It was written with the cooperation of Joseph Gargan, a Kennedy cousin, who was involved in the nightmare. . . .

Damore's book leaves no doubt that: a) Kennedy left

the party for a romantic interlude; b) he was drunk; c) he drove off the bridge at considerable speed; and d) his license had expired five months earlier.

It discloses how Ted Sorenson, President John F. Kennedy's speechwriter, drafted Sen. Kennedy's fictitious explanation of the tragedy for a national TV audience."

People Magazine shares the enthusiasm:

"An achievement of reportorial diligence, this book tells a story that the most imaginative crime novelist would have been hard put to invent. It is a tale of death, intrigue, obstruction of justice, corruption and politics. It is also one view of why Sen. Edward M. Kennedy was never indicted in connection with Mary Jo Kopechne's death . . . readers will find it hard to put down."

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Israel and the Media

Are current events in Israel getting fair coverage?

In December of 1987, an Israeli civilian was stabbed by Arabs in the Gaza territory, administered by Israel. On the following day, four Gaza Arabs were killed by an automobile driven by an Israeli. The two events were totally unrelated. Yet, the rumor spread that the Arab deaths were revenge murders by the Israelis. Rioting broke out and spread into Judea-Sumaria (the "West Bank"), also administered by Israel. It was the beginning of the "intifada," which still goes on. The media have covered and continue to cover this uprising extensively. Are they doing it fairly?

What are the facts?

■ The conflict between the Israeli government and the Arabs in the areas administered by Israel, the so-called "intifada," is essentially a minor regional one. It does not compare in scope, in violence and in the number of people killed or injured to the many other conflicts going on in the world right at this time, such as the conflict between the Basques and Spain; between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland; and between Moslems, Hindus and Sikhs in India. And there are many more. Just as with the Arab-Israel conflict, no easy or early solution seems at hand.

■ Yet, while the "intifada" is only one of many regional conflicts, the volume of its coverage in the media has made it appear to be a major world event. There are over 250 press and t.v. reporters accredited in Israel, a tiny country the size of New Jersey and with only half the population of New Jersey. This large media contingent is second only in number to that of Washington and Moscow—and less than that of such key news centers as London, Paris, Bonn, New Delhi, Peking or Tokyo. Naturally, all of these reporters must produce daily stories in order to justify their presence. This results in much journalistic overkill. *The Washington Post*, for instance, reports in an internal audit that... during a 5-month period in 1988, they published over 300,000 words on the "intifada," more than two articles daily, one-quarter of which appeared on the front page. That was the most intense coverage by the *Post* of any continuing story. In contrast, when in one day, 65 Shi'ites were killed in one of the brotherly battles in neighboring Lebanon, the *Post* gave that only 600 words, in an article on page 15.

■ But it isn't just the intensity of coverage that casts serious doubt about the fairness of the media. It's primarily the slant that is being given to the news, both in the print media and on television. Television, especially, thrives on "action bites," short dramatic scenes with potential to get the viewer involved. For instance, we see over and over again pictures of

teenage boys throwing rocks at Israel soldiers, and the soldiers chasing those teenagers with guns and clubs. That inevitably creates the impression of Israel as the bully or the Goliath, and of the "Palestinians" as defenseless Davids. The opposite is true, of course. Israel is a beleaguered country surrounded by implacable enemies, who incessantly plot its destruction. The "intifada" is part of that never-ending war.

■ The media do not show the hundreds of Israeli soldiers and civilians who have been grievously wounded and in some cases killed by rocks and gasoline bombs. They do not show the Arabs setting countless arson fires, in which over 25,000 acres of forest—every tree having lovingly been planted by hand—have been destroyed. They do not show the attacks on Jewish farms, the wanton destruction of industrial and public service facilities, the fire bombing of hundreds of buses, and the ruthless killing of livestock. They do not show the PLO terror aimed at the "Palestinians" themselves. In the last seventeen months of the "intifada" dozens of Palestinian Arabs have been murdered by the PLO, hundreds injured, many critically. This campaign of intimidation has increased since Yasir Arafat allegedly renounced terrorism.

■ In the few cases in which fuller coverage of the conflict was attempted on t.v., such coverage usually did turn out to be more "show-biz" than serious reporting. ABC's reportage "Six Days Plus Twenty Years" was so blatantly anti-Israel in tone that Arab countries rushed to use it as a propaganda film. Peter Jennings on ABC insistently perpetuates the odious comparison of Israel with South Africa. TV interviews with people in the territories invariably show reasonably middle class intellectuals and professionals with whom the American viewer can identify—never the arsonists, the bus bombers and the throwers of Molotov cocktails. The occasional Israeli spokesman that gets trotted out is almost always a member of the radical left or of the so-called "Peace Now" movement, quite unrepresentative of mainline Israeli thinking.

The media do not give the "intifada" fair coverage. It's partly the sheer volume of the coverage, which gives this minor regional conflict perceived importance that it doesn't have. It also lies in the persistent anti-Israel slant that permeates the reporting in all media. Finally, the media, almost without exception, focus on the immediate "drama" and do not explore the history and background of this conflict. The most important point, always omitted, is that the conflict between Israel and the "Palestinians" is not the core problem in the area. The core problem is the unremitting obsession of the Arab states to destroy Israel, their refusal to make peace with it, or to lift the economic boycott against Israel—regardless of what disposition may ultimately be made of the "West Bank." Israel, more even than other beleaguered pro-Western nations, is the target of disinformation and unfair reporting. Largely because it is a dependable friend and ally of the United States, the Jewish state is another victim of the "blame America first" bias in the media.

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THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

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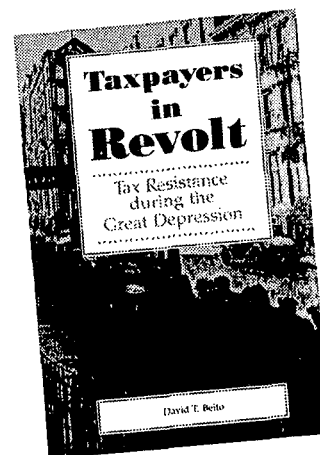
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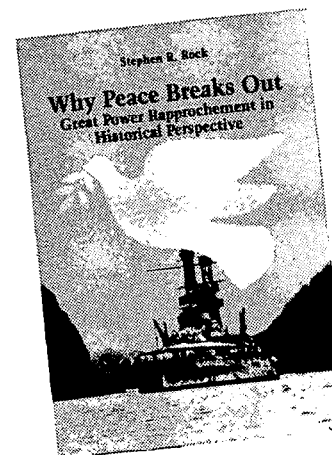
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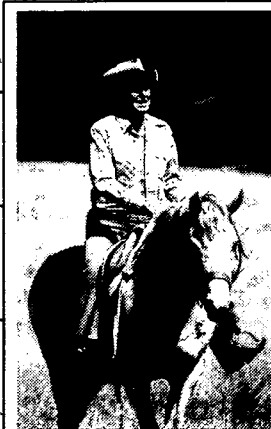
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	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6
		Georgia ratifies Constitution (1788)	U.S. breaks diplomatic ties with Cuba (1961)	Carter imposes Soviet grain embargo (1980)	Cambodia becomes Communist People's Republic (1975)	
7 U.S. imposes economic sanctions against Libya (1986)	8 Fidel Castro entered Havana in triumph (1959)	9 Mao Anshu returns to Philippines (1941)	10 Thomas Paine publishes 'Common Sense' (1776)	11 Alexander Hamilton's Birthday (1755)	12 Edmund Burke's Birthday (1729)	
14 Ratification Day	15 Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday	16 Reagan's Inauguration Day	17 Benjamin Franklin's Birthday (1706)	18 Daniel Webster's Birthday (1792)	19 Leon Trotsky's death (1929)	
21 Alger Hiss found guilty (1950)	22 Rev. W. W. Wadsworth's Birthday (1733)	23 Jerusalem proclaimed Israel's Capital (1949)	24 Winston Churchill dies (1965)	25 Judah's parole from death (1946)	26 Douglas MacArthur's Birthday (1880)	
28 José Martí's Birthday (1853)	29 Thomas Paine's Birthday (1737)	30 Tet Offensive (1968)	31 In successful U.S. satellite launched (1958)			



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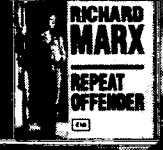
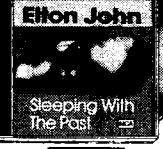
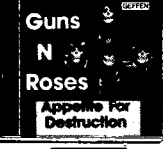
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THE CONTINUING CRISIS



• November began with unanticipated rowdiness in East Germany disturbing the sleep of all non-Teutonic Western Europeans and ended with rowdiness in Czechoslovakia disturbing the sleep of all remaining Stalinists worldwide, including Mr. Alexander Cockburn of the *Nation* and Fat Sal, the helium balloon blower at the Children's Zoo in Central Park. Before the month was out, the Berlin Wall was full of holes as was the Communist leadership of Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. Of a sudden the *New York Times* was publishing pieces in its travel section booming the "Opulent Spas" of Czechoslovakia and the "Pasha's Pool" of old Budapest. This has got to end. Once the twits who pore over this celebrated section of the *Times* begin carting their fat wives off to the "Opulent Spas" and to the "Pasha's Pools," Communism will be reimposed in Eastern Europe and by popular demand.

• A presentiment spreads that the Cold War is ending. From the Pentagon word leaked that our government can cut \$180 billion from the military by 1994, and the Liberals are raising the goofball chorus that conservatives and Ronald Reagan had nothing to do with current events though they directed foreign policy throughout the 1980s. Yet hold the celebrations! Neither in Eastern Europe nor in the USSR has usufruct of the secret police and the military been handed over to a United Nations peace-keeping force or even to officials elected by secret ballot—a matter worth contemplating before we pound our swords into Capitol Hill pork, as our great leaders would have us do. In New York City the spirit of Tammany Hall was resurrected when clubhouse pol Mr. David Dinkins squeezed out victory over the morally pristine Mr. Rudolph Giuliani to become mayor and chief boodler of the worm-eaten Apple. Brooklyn's Mr. Peter Roman won the Combat Roach Control System's prestigious award for the year's largest cockroach, beating out entries from many of the dirtiest cities in the country. Mr. Roman's 1.88-inch beauty was measured by electronic digital calipers at New York's plush Explorers Club, where the \$1,000-prize and certificate for a lifetime supply of roach killer were accepted on behalf of

Mr. Roman, whose whereabouts is unknown, by Mr. Barry Glass, president of Big Apple Pest Control.

• The French government, through its Interior and Sports Ministries, has banned blithe spirits from leaping off tall structures secured with only an elastic band to protect them from disfigurement or worse; but this does not mean that the sport cannot be taken up elsewhere, for instance, in the United States, where the skyscraper was first developed and where we still have many tall buildings in private hands. In West Stockbridge, Massachusetts, the testimony of Mr. Richard Rohrbacher, owner of the Kingsmont summer camp, has cleared up much of the mystery over the unprecedented tumult that issued from his camp last Labor Day weekend and roused neighbors to call the cops. According to Mr. Rohrbacher's testimony to local authorities, he was being held prisoner by 650 lesbians, who, contrary to them, were not members of a women's rights group at all but hardened lesbians intent on playing rock 'n' roll at some weirdo revel called the Full Circle Festival. Before Mr. Rohrbacher could apprehend what purposes the husky ladies

and their skinny lovers would put his lovely camp to, he was imprisoned in his office with two well-armed harri-dans at the door. Mr. Rohrbacher's assertions were fully corroborated by Police Chief Michael Kirchner who responded to three complaints at the camp that weekend, the most serious of which, in Chief Kirchner's vivid depiction, "involved seven handicapped lesbians in wheelchairs blocking the road because they didn't have full access to the camp." Celebrants at the tenth annual "Humiliation of the Great Satan March" hanged four American spies in downtown Tehran.

• Mr. Lech Walesa received four standing ovations during his November 15th address to the United States Congress; even the drunks stood up or were so squiffed that they fell beneath their chairs. The Labor Department announced that consumer prices in October rose 0.5 percent. Mr. John Gardner, a Kansas City, Missouri, nursing home resident, was shot and killed by four young men intent on stealing his freshly purchased cheeseburger and fries. French researchers announced that a "natural cream" rubbed within the confines of the navel can lessen

hemorrhoidal bleeding, also known as Jimmy Carter disease. In Toronto, Canada, federal judge Jean Dube ruled that a homosexual prisoner, Mr. Timothy Veysey, has the right to apply for conjugal visits from his boyfriend assuming that no life-endangering sexual aids are brought onto government property. If all goes well, the happy couple will be able to spend seventy-two hours every three to six months secluded in a special trailer on the grounds of Warkworth Prison. In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, three men convicted of armed robbery were beheaded by the sword and then crucified after Friday prayers; and in darkest Tyler, Texas, a jury sentenced Mr. Merwyn Willis Nichols, 49, to life imprisonment for stealing brisket worth \$10.35.

• On November 21 Mr. Dan Wenk, an official at the Mount Rushmore monument, announced plans to perform the first structural analysis of the faces on Mount Rushmore since the 1930s. Mr. Wenk betrayed no hint of this magazine's intention to have President Ronald Reagan's face added to the monument despite *The American Spectator's* recent announcement that President Reagan's left ear will be molded from the crushed stone of the Berlin Wall. The Terror has begun. At the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, a group of campus rightists led by the diabolical College Republicans overwhelmed a poorly attended meeting of progressives in The Campus Awareness Organization, elected each other officers, and put this once progressive organization to their own insensitive purposes. Miss Monica de Alzaga, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marcello de Alzaga of Buenos Aires, was married to Disque D. Deane, Jr., a son of Marjorie S. Deane and Mr. Deane, both of New York, Greenwich, Connecticut, and Tucker's Town, Bermuda. The new Mrs. Deane is a great-great-granddaughter of Mr. Manuel Quintana, a former president of Argentina and excellent *bolita* player.

• Prince Franz Josef II of Liechtenstein passed on as did Mr. Timoci Bavadra, who was prime minister of Fiji for a month before being ousted in the South Pacific's first army coup. Mr. Barry Sadler, co-writer and performer of "Ballad of the Green Berets," died fourteen months after be-



ing ambushed in Guatemala City, where he was reportedly training anti-Communist guerrillas contrary to the wishes of many illustrious members of the U.S. Congress. And in Madrid, Spain, one of the most misunderstood figures of the Spanish Civil War, Miss Dolores Ibarruri, died at the age of ninety-three. Nicknamed "La Pasionaria," the famed crone was idolized by members of the Spanish Communist party, laboring under the mistaken belief that during the Civil War she coined the defiant phrase "*No pasarán!*"—"They shall not pass!"—in response to an attack on Madrid by Franco's rebels. Actually the phrase was coined by her in response to the flatulence of a rowdy group of anarchists

who were mischievously breaking wind one night at a Madrid cafe where "La Pasionaria" served as a rather bossy waitress. She lived in the Soviet Union from 1939 until Franco's death in 1977, whereupon the Russians were quick to return the disagreeable lady to Spain. There she entered upon a new life of controversy in which she blew up practically every pacemaker implanted in her unruly body.

• In Melbourne, Australia, an unnamed male assailant leaped into the gorilla cage of the Melbourne Zoo, accosting Betsy, a 220-pound ape, and shouting, "I've come to kill a gorilla." The attacker, who kicked and punched the terrified Betsy before being arrested, could face charges of assault,

cruelty to animals, and sexual harassment. In a note on Chinese femininity, a Chinese weekly review reports that that 17-year-old girl from the southwestern province of Sichuan "moulted" for three months after biting an amorous python that fell on her as she slept by a riverside. The snake died. After a salacious debate and snickering all around, the Toronto City Council voted to replace the word "manhole" with the non-sexist term "maintenance hole," despite objections from Councilwoman Maureen Prinsloo who evoked mystification by asseverating: "Women are sensible enough that they don't go down these stupid things."

• The *auteur* of the *Washington Times's* magisterial "Inside the Belt-

way" column, Mr. John Elvin, acting on a tip from snoops at the Media Research Center, reports that Miss Raquel Welch notified viewers of the Larry King show that "Chicago is one of our 52 states." Mr. King approached the problem gingerly, but eventually noted, "By 52 states, you mean 50 states and the District of Columbia and where else?" But Miss Welch was adamant, responding, "Well, there are 52 states in the Union, so basically it means that we're running around all over the place." On November 27 Mr. Zdenek Janicek, a brewery worker, rose up before a Prague street crowd and read from the Declaration of Independence. Ms. magazine folded, again.

—RET

CORRESPONDENCE

Strawberry Fields Forever

In his article "The Year They Legalized Drugs" (*TAS*, November 1989), Victor Gold attempts to dismiss the arguments for drug legalization by raising the specter that existing cartels supplying illegal drugs would monopolize the market. Mr. Gold overlooks some essential points in his discussion.

First, he asserts that parallels with alcohol prohibition from 1919 to 1933 do not apply to drugs. He notes that legal suppliers manufactured alcohol prior to Prohibition and were ready in the wings to recommence manufacture upon repeal, thus ensuring that the mafia could not continue to monopolize supplies. No such legal suppliers ever existed for drugs, asserts Mr. Gold. He is wrong on two counts. Prior to drug prohibition in 1914, numerous reputable firms supplied cocaine, among other drugs. Of course, since drug prohibition has now been in effect for seventy-five years, these suppliers no longer furnish cocaine. However, I might note that there are a few licensed suppliers who do furnish cocaine and other drugs, such as marijuana, to researchers and to some medical users.

Second, Mr. Gold seems to exhibit no knowledge of the agricultural requirements for growing cocaine, heroin, or marijuana—requirements that make it highly unlikely that anyone could monopolize supplies. Opium poppies for heroin can grow in virtually any country in the world. How rapidly alternative supplies arise is evidenced by the fact that when Turkey managed to suppress the growing of opium poppies there, Southwest Asian countries immediately became a large supplier to the world market.

Coca leaves, for cocaine, can be

grown cheaply and easily in some seventeen countries in the world. At least 2.5 million square miles of land have been identified as suitable for the growing of coca leaves. Current production is confined to about 700 square miles. It is exceedingly unlikely, then, that any single group, or indeed, set of groups, could control supplies under these conditions.

Marijuana can also be grown in a wide variety of locales. Indeed, there is now evidence that it is currently being grown in all fifty states in the U.S.

At the risk of belaboring the point, I might draw a comparison with OPEC and oil production. Despite valiant efforts, OPEC has had difficulty acting as a monopolistic cartel though it need only coordinate the oil-producing activities of relatively few oil-producing countries. The drugs that Mr. Gold believes would be subject to monopolistic supplies can be grown in a much larger number of countries, require little capital expenditures, require little lead time before a crop is produced, are cheap to transport, and are relatively easy to process. These are hardly the conditions in which monopolistic supply is likely to be a problem.

There may be other difficult issues that must be addressed to make legalization work, but Mr. Gold, with his cries of monopoly, has not hit upon even one of them.

—Lynn Scarlett
Research Director
Reason Foundation
Santa Monica, California

Victor Gold replies:

As one who recognizes a superior satirist when he sees one, I tip my pen to Lynn Scarlett. It's true that I have

"no knowledge of the agricultural requirements for growing cocaine, heroin or marijuana," but Ms. Scarlett's own unique research into that field—especially her revolutionary discovery of how to "grow" cocaine and heroin—is clearly the answer to the nagging problem of how we can save the American family farm. Might I suggest that she forward her ideas on developing these lucrative cash crops to Senator Jesse Helms or some other member of the Senate Agriculture Committee?

Ticked Off

I recently reviewed your article by Michael Fumento entitled "The Asbestos Rip-Off" (*TAS*, October 1989). I am both saddened and angered at the way that my remarks regarding this issue were completely distorted and taken out of context.

At no time did I indicate that removal of asbestos was "unnecessary." I did state that because of court orders requiring us to vacate and then return to McAteer High School we were compelled to incur extra costs for salaries and overtime expenses associated with these moves. The implication in your article that the San Francisco Unified School District or myself believes that the asbestos removal was unnecessary is misleading and blatantly untrue.

I demand you retract the statements attributable to me in as prominent a fashion as they were originally published. I want no doubt whatsoever as to my position or the position of the District on this issue.

—Ramon C. Cortines
Superintendent of Schools
San Francisco Unified School District
San Francisco, California

Michael Fumento replies:

First, I never said that the San Francisco Unified School District said that the abatement was unnecessary; that remark was attributed to Mr. Cortines alone. Among his remarks that I chose to type directly into my word processor were:

- "Some parents were hysterical, and I think that was encouraged. I think we still do not know the reality of asbestos."
- "I think we have not been realistic, I think we should have spent dollars on education that went to asbestos."
- "I think that some reason should be used. I think that advocates tend to incite parents, students, and staff."

Mr. Cortines also expressed anger at the White Lung Association, an organization consisting primarily of occupational asbestos sufferers, who he said he thought would give an honest appraisal of the need for abatement but "I found that instead of assisting me, they were more interested in organizing."

These statements, along with the vast majority of those made during our 10-15 minute conversation, had nothing to do with court orders but dealt directly with the issue of the danger of asbestos and the need for abatement.

Either I never sought to get a quote where Mr. Cortines said exactly, "I think the abatement should not have taken place," or else I didn't bother to type it in because while it was a nice bit of irony it was hardly an important point. The point is it was totally unnecessary. I understand that many a statement made to a reporter one day is regretted the next and that pressure must have been put on Mr. Cortines to issue a public denial. He has now done so.

(continued on page 50)

EDITORIALS



LET US GIVE THANKS

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

In my library I have almost an entire wall of books absorbed with one aspect or another of that parlous feud that has divided the West and the Soviet bloc for four decades, haunting private life and dominating all sense of national purpose. Not one of those books envisages the dissolution of totalitarianism now being witnessed by the agape citizens of the West. Thus it should not surprise us that only one national leader's words have done justice to this historic occasion. West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl picked up the telephone and called President Bush to acknowledge that the peaceful end of the Cold War was made possible only by a resolute United States.

For more than forty years the United States has waged cold war despite ceaseless deprecation from many who benefited from American sacrifices without ever pausing to say thanks. Sophisticated Europeans such as General Charles de Gaulle made us out to be reckless one minute and faithless the next. Through the decades we have been portrayed as inept diplomats, trigger-happy rogues, imperialists, and, in the 1980s, cowboys—Hollywood cowboys, not even real cowboys! Now Chancellor Kohl has expressed his gratitude. Gratitude is a wondrously appropriate sentiment, and we who may now enjoy the benefits of peace should be grateful to many veterans of the Cold War, many of whom were Europeans and even Russians.

There are the writers who braved abuse and poverty by exposing the brutal nature of Communism. When the Englishman Malcolm Muggeridge returned from Russia in the 1930s to refute such celebrated defenders of Stalin as the playwright Shaw, Muggeridge lost his job, leaving his wife and four children on hard times. George Orwell was not accorded a much friendlier reception for blowing the whistle on the Communists in the Spanish Civil War and for satirizing

Communist totalitarianism. Let us also express thanks to Arthur Koestler, whose *Darkness at Noon* exposed Stalin's show trials, and to Whittaker Chambers, who in *Witness* exposed Communism's versatile evil and who died in despair for the West. The prose of these writers paved the way for the deeds of the Cold Warriors.

And so let us give thanks for the Cold Warriors themselves, beginning with Winston Churchill, who despite so many years on the firing line, first as the derided Jeremiah of the 1930s then as wartime prime minister, still had the grit to notify the world in his March 5, 1946, speech in Fulton, Missouri, of the Iron Curtain drawn across Europe and of the dangers ahead. Let us be grateful for America's greatest secretary of state, Dean Acheson, whose diplomatic career was crucial to establishment of the Truman Doctrine, Point Four, the Marshall Plan, NATO, the end of the Berlin airlift, and the pursuit of the Korean War. Let us be grateful for Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, who kept the United States on an internationalist course. The academic treatise of George Kennan gave the United States a scheme for pursuing the East-West conflict, namely: "con-

tainment." And a remarkable collection of American diplomats implemented the policy, among them Averell Harriman, Charles Bohlen, George Marshall, and two men who endured so much abuse, John Foster Dulles and that singularly honorable man, Dean Rusk.

Through the years every President from John F. Kennedy to Richard Nixon paid an onerous price for waging the Cold War. Then in the 1980s Ronald Reagan faced the renewed challenge of Brezhnev and his successors and demonstrated that an arms race is a race the United States could and would win. If there was one politician who brought the Cold War to an end it was Reagan. And if there was one writer to rouse the West to a final awareness of the horrors behind the Iron Curtain it was Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, whose

pitiless *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* began the tolling of the bell on Marxism.

But of course no one person can be cited for bringing to an end so epic a conflict. Millions deserve gratitude, for instance: the voters, who supported the aforementioned leaders and paid the bills; the intelligence agents and military personnel, some of whom paid the final price that U.S. Army Major Arthur D. Nicholson, Jr. paid on March 24, 1985, when he was shot in cold blood while on duty in East Germany; the dissidents in the Iron Curtain countries, many still incarcerated; and even the Communist leaders who now seem to realize that their opposites in the West only want peace and prosperity for all—which includes the people of China, Cuba, and the sorely pressed Nicaraguans and Salvadorans. □

HILL-JACK BUGABOOS

Foreign policy fascinates me. It is chess with high purpose, to wit: ensuring America's security and other interests around the world. There are adult Americans, I know, who do not believe we have such interests abroad. Many of them live rustically in antique shanties, the grounds cluttered with rusting jalopies and unruly barnyard friends. Some, on the other hand, are university professors of a certain age whose heads reverberate with rock music and on whose aging frames are hung the work shirts and the dungarees of Woodstock, circa 1969.

Both groups—the hill-jack reactionaries and the arrested adolescents of utopia—hate each other. Ironically, however, they share many of the same bugaboos, for instance that a conspiracy of fancy pants based in New York City conspires ceaselessly to subvert the Republic and put it to the devious purposes of David Rockefeller & family.

But you think I am being droll. Well, pursuant to my interest in foreign policy I have, for more than a decade, been a member of a foreign policy

forum, the Council on Foreign Relations, based in sordid Manhattan. As a member I have occasion to listen to and participate in discussions on foreign affairs featuring foreign leaders and American officials representing a wide range of views. Somewhat bizarrely, this organization has caused hair to stand on end among those reactionaries and radicals who still have hair. That the CFR inspires similar conspiracy theories among reactionaries and radicals is another example of their shared derangements, but why do they not respond with similar paranoia to the National Association of Manufacturers or Rotary International? And why are so many of these inflamed radicals holding forth at our great universities? Why are they not out in the woods with the hill-jacks?

Right now the hill-jacks have been thrown into renewed alarm about the existence of the CFR and are frantically writing all CFR members who are conservative to notify us that we are members of a Rockefeller conspiracy to subvert America. "I recently learned that you are a member . . .," writes



Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post column syndicated by King Features.

John from Russellville, Missouri. "How can you morally justify aligning yourself with an organization whose goal is essentially to *destroy* America?" "Rethink your affiliation with the CFR," John continues, "and resign, making a public statement indicating your reasons." More than one hundred other sufferers of the CFR pox have written me this very same letter. What stands out, aside from the touching faith in conspiracy, is the pomposity and the insistence that we conservative members of the CFR publicly recant. Mr. Joseph Stalin strongly advocated

this form of public contrition and, more recently, the Rev. Ayatollah. As for the pomposity, there is something wonderful about this quality in a person. Many of the great figures of fun in Western literature have put smiles on our faces by parading about in an exalted state, beginning with Don Quixote and including, most recently, *New York Times* columnist James Reston. Mr. Reston has solemnized his retirement from the *Times* by granting a memorable interview resounding with grandiose observations about himself, the sacred art of journalism (which he

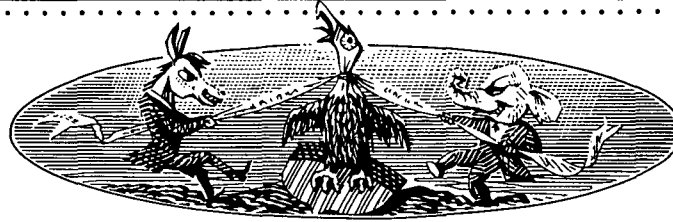
claims has made totalitarianism obsolete), and the world (whose virtues he takes personal credit for and whose vices are laid to the demon REAGAN).

One other remarkable feature of this campaign against the Council on Foreign Relations is the hill-jacks' insistence that conservatives not participate in any organization that is dominated by Liberals as the Council most certainly is. Here is another piece of bigotry that the hill-jacks share with the radicals, for the radicals do not believe that people on the left should ever associate with their ideological op-

posites. Thus wherever the left-wing zealots get the upper hand, either on a university faculty or in a bureaucracy, they devote themselves to driving diverse thought out. On how many college faculties in this country is there a lively give-and-take between Liberals and conservatives? In fact, on how many faculties are there any conservatives?

In foreign policy the certitudes of the past forty years are now in question. Americans must see the world as it is. And the aged bugaboos of reactionaries and radicals will not do. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



COMMUNISTS SHOOT PEOPLE, DON'T THEY?

by Tom Bethell

At the request of a reader in Maryland, a special Strange New Respect citation will be given this year to Paul H. Nitze, once the leading spokesman for the Committee on the Present Danger, who resigned from the Carter Administration in protest against its weak defense policies. Nitze was awarded the Shelby Cullom Davis Award by the Ethics and Public Policy Center—one of the few conservative prizes in Washington. Then Nitze joined the Reagan arms control team and something happened. Strobe Talbott, *Time* magazine's chief ideologist, wrote an admiring book about him. Nitze's strange behavior in the latter Reagan years serves only to remind us of what the Vatican has known for years: like Catholic bishops, Washington policymakers should be made to retire at age seventy-five. On the verge of giving up half our nuclear submarine fleet in one more madcap arms control treaty, the octogenarian Nitze eventually had to be pushed out the door by the incoming secretary of state, James A. Baker.

"What other old cold warrior has had a university like Johns Hopkins School of International Studies name a building after him?" my Maryland man wrote. "And Nitze is now an honored guest speaker at the elegant rallies of the Arms Control Association in Dupont Circle. How many invitations does Sen. Orrin Hatch get in the heart of Hiveland?"

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator's Washington correspondent.

Nonetheless, the junior senator from Utah received the Strange New Respect Award this year for his support of the scheme to socialize child care with massive federal subsidy and regulation (the Senate's Act for Better Child Care). Since 1970, the effective value of the dependent tax exemption has fallen by more than 70 percent. This has driven many mothers out of the home and into the workplace. "Child care" can thus be restored in one of two ways. The dependent tax exemption can be increased (the conservative or libertarian approach, reducing government involvement in our lives), or socialized child care can be increased (the socialist's preference). Orrin Hatch, a bishop in the Mormon Church, opted for the latter.

"When you came to Washington in 1976, Orrin, I don't mind telling you that we were all alarmed," Senator Edward Kennedy said at the awards ceremony in Clark Clifford's office. Also present was Marian Wright Edelman, the world's most compassionate human, who earlier that day had berated House Speaker Tom Foley for failing to railroad the child-care bill through conference committee before Thanksgiving adjournment. (But it will be back in the new year.)

"Republicans with principles are always the toughest to crack," Kennedy continued, with a bemused Hatch by his side. "Not that you have abandoned those principles, we hasten to add. But over the years, as you became more realistic and more knowledgeable

about the ways of Washington, we all recognize that you grew in office, grew in stature, grew in our estimation and respect. You have remained a superb fighter for the causes that you still support, as we on the other side of the aisle can ruefully attest. But as the years passed, a new spirit of statesmanship and generosity began to infuse your philosophy. Always affectionately regarded by those on the right, you reached out to a more inclusive constituency—one that is poor as well as rich. I speak for all of us inside the Beltway, Orrin, when I say that you have won a permanent place in our hearts with your support of this compassionate legislation. In the future, we hope, your name will be inscribed on federal day care centers from coast to coast. Working mothers across the nation will have occasion to remember you with gratitude . . ."

A few days after the Berlin Wall was breached, I attended a conference on developments in Eastern Europe, organized by Radio Free Europe and held at the Madison Hotel in Washington. Lech Walesa, in the midst of a whirlwind tour of the States, came to the podium and answered questions with the wit and repartee of a cracker-barrel philosopher. He contrived to be both diplomatic and "unbuttoned" at the same time. The television pictures of East Berliners freed at last from the prison of Communism had been moving, no doubt historic. Walesa's own

role in the unraveling of Communism will surely be recorded in the history books. But he didn't say anything of comparable moment. His mission was more mundane: fund-raising on behalf of the new Polish government. (One understands that a Communist-run country is unable to generate wealth without stealing or begging from its neighbors, but why must this presumption of unproductivity persist after the Communists have been [mostly] deposed? Maybe there's an answer to this question, but Walesa didn't provide it.)

At lunch I found myself sitting between Melvyn Lasky, the long-time editor of *Encounter*, and George Urban, Hungarian-born, whose many outstanding interviews have been a highlight of *Encounter* in recent years. Both Lasky and Urban live in England. I hoped that Lasky might say something dramatic about the stirring events we were witnessing—events that he has tirelessly encouraged in the pages of *Encounter*. But he too had fund-raising on his mind—following an unexpected withdrawal of support (for *Encounter*) by Conrad Black of the *Daily Telegraph*. He seemed more interested in dilating on the "irrational" tactics of the East German Communists than in expatiating on the Big Picture.

At the conference, we heard from Mr. Felix Rohatyn, a European émigré investment banker who quoted Jean Monnet at length and believes that the creation of a new international development bank, with the U.S. putting up \$1 billion, will work wonders for

Eastern Europe. The Soviets had been the "guarantor of security" in that part of the world, and he seemed less than reassured by their declining role. But if international planning could be restored under U.S. auspices, everything would be all right, apparently. His views are highly congenial to the American establishment, and one has heard him touted as a Treasury secretary in a Democratic administration.

Jeane Kirkpatrick, former ambassador to the United Nations, came closer to the truth when she said we were witnessing "the abandonment of the totalitarian project." The attempt to "engineer souls," as Lenin had put it, had become more and more counterproductive, and had now been abandoned. "That's the big news," she said, "and it's very important." A few days later she noted in a newspaper column

the failure of the Communist party's "great experiment in human engineering, designed to make human nature conform to its preferred model." Michael Kinsley said much the same thing in the *New Republic*, noting "how completely Communists have failed to reinvent humanity. Not only have they failed to remake human nature as Marx predicted, they haven't even managed to sell their own ideology to genera-

tions that have grown up completely under their control."

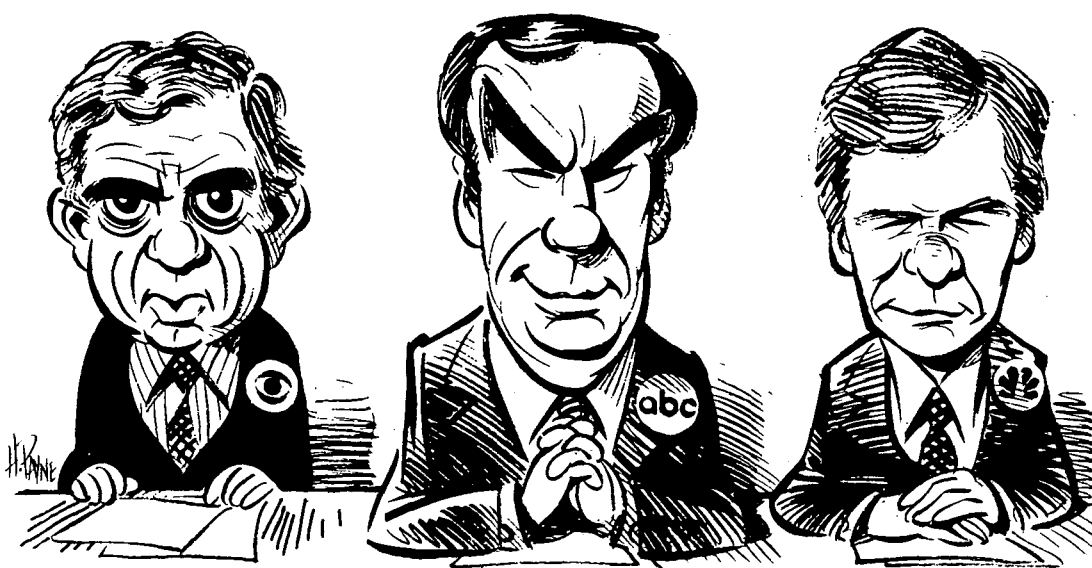
The word "even" in that last sentence is wrong. What Kinsley should have said is that they "especially" haven't managed to sell their own ideology to generations under their control. The proletarians of Russia and Eastern Europe have been the human rats in the Communist laboratory, and as such have been especially well placed to suffer through the whole experiment. American liberals, by contrast, are still disposed to dream the Communist dream of a reinvented human nature. Some of them (Michael Kinsley, for example) are inclined to believe that male-female differences are not essential but cultural, so that if we institute affirmative action programs, induct women into the Army, require the expenditure of large sums of money on female athletic programs, and repeat the mantra "he or she" often enough, these merely cultural gender differences will disappear.

American liberals and leftists have not given up yet on the dream of remaking human nature. We will know that they have done so only when they abandon the use of force or implicit force (laws that carry real penalties for those that disobey them) in order to attain it. The socialist impulse is always at its most virulent in a society that has not yet been much infected by it. In the same way a virus is strongest when there are few antibodies to counteract it. Compared with many other countries in the twentieth century, the American exposure to socialism has been mild. Therefore the antibodies are few and the virus still potent. For that reason the American left is now (probably has been for some time) at the frontier of world socialism. They still believe in it; still want it; still hunger for it—with a hunger that normal people cannot imagine. Notice the tremendous emotional investment that the American left has in El Salvador. It is not the "human rights abuses" that put the left in such a rage over what has happened in that country (the Communist guerrillas in El Salvador have been murdering mayors and innocent bystanders for years). It is their frustration: the country was "due" to go Communist, but so far it has not. And so bitter disappointment is construed as injustice.

What is the source of this hunger for a remade human nature? It is essentially a religious feeling, oddly distorted. It is *not*, as some think, a disbelief in God so much as it is a rebellion against God; a rebellion against creation. God didn't do the job right! And so human nature must be done over. That is why the totalitarian project has so much appeal for clergy-

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men who for one reason or another have lost their spiritual moorings. A hundred years ago "science" was the shining new city in which the socialists planned to build their home. "Scientific socialism" was the talk of the town. Today, as the philosopher Michael Novak has noted, the secular and ecclesiastical left are moving closer and closer together. It is in the rectory and the sanctuary that the socialists will continue to draw up their blueprint for a new society. And from the pulpit they will proclaim it. This should be seen historically as a reversion to the norm; it was the socialist identification with science (when it was the new and coming thing) that is already beginning to seem transitory. Today the left is disenchanted with science, which has given us atom bombs, pollution, and nuclear power stations (read Jeremy Rifkin for the details).

And don't forget: "Science" did *not* give us New Soviet Man, who, according to the plan, and the 1921 prediction of Leon Trotsky, would "become immeasurably stronger, wiser, and subtler; his body will become more harmonized, his movements more rhythmic; his voice more musical. The forms of life will become dynamically dramatic. The average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx. And above these heights new peaks will rise." What a disappointment science has proved to be!

A hundred years ago the socialists thought they had not merely "science" but nature itself on their side. That is, they thought that human nature was already changing under the influence of evolution. The professor of economics at Cambridge University, Alfred Marshall, wrote in his *Principles of Economics* that the "changes in human nature during the last fifty years have been so rapid as to force themselves on the attention." In 1890 this did not even seem controversial; today it is unthinkable. No economist (or biologist) would say any such thing. The ideas of progress and evolution (which may in fact be inseparable) really have declined today. Possibly the left can make no headway without them. The irony is that evolutionism was supposed to have sired the unwelcome offspring, laissez-faire capitalism (or Social Darwinism). More likely it gave rise to unwarrantedly high hopes for collectivism.

The question remains: Will our home-grown, capitalist-fed left be discouraged by the failed attempt to reform human nature in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe? My guess is: not greatly discouraged. They have long regarded the Soviet Union and the Iron Curtain as an embarrassment anyway: bad advertisements for a noble dream, irresistible propaganda for anti-Communists. For that reason, most on the

left are probably glad to see the Wall come down. Then again, if it really is true that Communism can only be attained by force, so that its realization is not to be expected in a democratic world, the collapse of will in the East has to be discouraging to those on the left who recognize man's stubbornly intractable nature. The recent, interesting little tiff between Alexander Cockburn and Christopher Hitchens in the *Na-*

tion, with Hitchens wittily and ironically "defending" Cockburn against the charge that he is a Stalinist, seems to express the disagreement between those on the left who still dream of a non-coercive socialism (Hitchens) and those who know force will always be needed (Cockburn), but are understandably reluctant to say so openly. Cockburn's position is the more realistic, but Hitchens has most of the troops on his side.

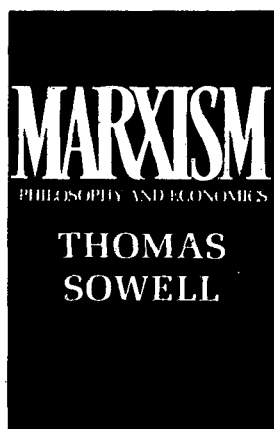
Most leftists, I suspect, don't understand that Communism will dwindle down to communes unless Communists are willing to shoot people.

One had always thought that Communism would go out with a bang, not a whimper. Maybe it will yet. Knowing that history is not on their side could make the Communist remnant far more dangerous. They still have the atom bomb. □

Thomas Sowell smashes the lies of Marxism



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Fred Barnes

REPUBLICANS MISCARRY ABORTION

However inept pro-life Republicans have shown themselves to be in running on their beliefs, there are ways they can turn the abortion question to their advantage. What's required is a bit of political courage and imagination.

Shortly after the Mobilize for Women's Lives rally in Washington on November 11—the one where Pete Seeger performed “This Land Is Your Land” as a pro-abortion song—I boarded a plane at Dulles Airport for San Francisco. A woman caught my eye as I waited for takeoff. She was exactly what the pro-life movement needs, a totally unappealing enemy. She wasn't ugly, but she looked mean, arrogant, selfish, and utterly unfeeling, a Me Decade lefty. I knew she'd been to the pro-choice rally. A sign was pasted on her sweater: “Abortion on demand and no apology for it.” If this woman could be cast on TV and in the press as the symbol of “abortion rights,” the battle would be over. Everyone would hate her. Abortion would be drastically curtailed or banned. America would be a better place.

It won't be that easy. Yes, I've seen polls that show there really isn't a pro-choice advantage in elections. Lance Tarrance's poll in the Virginia governor's race found that only 11.8 percent of voters decided solely on abortion. Of these, slightly more voted for the pro-life Republican, Marshall Coleman, than for the pro-choice Democrat, Doug Wilder. The CBS/*New York Times* survey on Election Day discovered that pro-life and pro-choice voters roughly cancelled each other out. The Mason-Dixon exit poll in Virginia got a different result—Wilder won 62-38 percent among voters for whom the abortion issue is “very important”—but that poll is dubious. It had Wilder winning the election by 55-45 percent (he actually got a tad over 50 percent, Coleman a tad under). My suspicion is that the people who lied about having voted for Wilder, who is black, then lied about what motivated their vote. “If you were a

truck driver who didn't want to say you'd voted for the white guy, that's how you'd respond to a pollster,” says Republican consultant David Keene.

Polls aside, the pro-life movement is losing. You merely have to watch supposedly pro-life Republicans these days to know that. They're in agony, afraid the abortion issue will drag them to defeat. Many of them sense, correctly, that there's a pro-choice mood in the country. People are queasy about abortion, but most don't want a ban. I think Illinois Gov. Jim Thompson hit the nail on the head when at the Republican Governors' Conference on November 13 he said, “My belief is that most Americans would say we start with respect for a woman's right to choose, except in [certain circumstances], rather than saying we start with the notion that all abortions ought to be illegal, except in cases of rape and incest or the mother's life.”

That mindset is the big problem, and

there are two smaller ones. One is the press. It's a wholly owned subsidiary of the pro-choicers. I can't think of an issue on which reporters have been more slanted or willing to let their personal feelings influence their reporting. Mark Shields, a semi-liberal columnist, has noted that “we have an unwritten American law that we basically call people what they want to be called. That's how we got, among others, Native American, Negro, black, African American and gay.” The press has made an exception for pro-lifers. They're “anti-abortion.” Shields asked, “If you're going to call the pro-choice people what they ask to be called, then don't the pro-life people deserve the same?” The answer from the media is no.

The other problem is rape and incest. There aren't but a few hundred abortions in these cases annually, but the national debate has concentrated on them, at least since President Bush

bravely vetoed a bill providing federal funding for such abortions for poor women. Opposing abortions in instances of rape or incest—Bush would allow the abortions but opposes taxpayer funding of them—is not a way to make yourself popular. Polls show that upwards of 90 percent of Americans believe abortions in cases of rape or incest should be permitted. In Virginia, Wilder hammered Coleman relentlessly for a pro-life position that makes abortion legal only to save the mother's life. Coleman's response was pathetic. He said he wouldn't propose a ban on these abortions, which of course he couldn't do anyway under *Roe v. Wade*.

To be blunt, the deck is stacked against the pro-life position. Yet the game is winnable. Pro-life Republicans don't need to wring their hands. If they make a vigorous effort, they can change public opinion, win (or stay in) office, and curb abortion. I've got five pieces of advice on how to achieve these goals:

1. *Don't switch or duck or obfuscate.*

This has become standard advice by now. Even Lee Atwater, the Republican national chairman, endorses it. The trouble is, Republicans aren't following it. They continue to switch, duck, and obfuscate. At the GOP governors' conference, Carroll Campbell of South Carolina said it's a “mistake” for pro-life Republicans not to state their position “clearly, succinctly.” Then Campbell blathered on about abortion in unclear, unsuccinct fashion.

Republicans are lucky the *Webster* ruling came in 1989, an off year. Imagine if all pro-life GOP House and Senate candidates had responded to the abortion issue as did Coleman and Jim Courter, the GOP gubernatorial candidate in New Jersey this year. It would have been a wipeout. Both took strong



Fred Barnes is a senior editor of the New Republic.

pro-life positions in the primary. Then came the *Webster* decision, which awakened the pro-choice movement. In the general election, both said their position on abortion was personal and that they wouldn't act on it as governor. They talked about abortion as little as possible. "If a candidate ducks the issue, he creates a character problem rather than just an issue problem," says Donald Devine, who runs Citizens for America. "People do not like chickens."

Besides, it won't work. Pro-choice Democrats are unwilling to vote for pro-choice Republicans over pro-life Democrats. But pro-life Republicans will jump ship in a hurry. Dropping the anti-abortion language from the Republican platform won't help either. I don't think a candidate has ever lost a race because of what was in his party's platform. It's his own position that matters, and he'll still have to take one. Better to stick with the pro-life stand.

2. *Be compassionate.* Devine, a smart pol, spoke persuasively about this need in a speech to Western Republicans last October. "The most important point a pro-life candidate must make is that he is compassionate," Devine said. "The fact is, women who have abortions are not criminals but decent people in a fix. There must be understanding. . . . The goal is not to send someone to jail, but to state the moral understanding of the community in the law that abortion is wrong in most circumstances. The idea is to convince women not to have abortions rather than to send the sheriff after her. A compassionate, concerned position will achieve this goal."

The pro-life position is, by definition, the more caring one. But too often pro-lifers sound as if they care only about the unborn child, not the woman. They should always keep in mind what they're asking a woman to do. She'll suffer morning sickness, be uncomfortable for months, look bloated, and jeopardize her health (maybe her life, too), all for a child she thinks she doesn't want. That's a lot to ask. So sympathy is mandatory. Lack of it will be detected, and resented, by voters, especially women.

3. *Talk up weak spots in the pro-choice position.* This seems obvious, but pro-life Republicans haven't done much of it. Pro-choicers are for allowing some pretty awful things—abortions in the second and third trimester, abortions if the child isn't of the gender the parents want, abortions in clinics that aren't as fully equipped and safe as hospitals, repeat abortions by the same woman, abortions for reasons of momentary inconvenience. Polls show the public is turned off by such selfish reasoning. It makes sense to force pro-choicers to answer for it—and for the excessive number

(1.5 million) of abortions each year.

Then there are the restrictions on abortion, permitted under *Webster*, that pro-choicers are committed to blocking—parental consent for abortions on women under eighteen, notification of husbands, a waiting period between the time an abortion is requested and when it's performed, "informed consent" (explaining what an abortion involves so the woman

Republicans are lucky the *Webster* ruling came in 1989, an off year. Imagine if all pro-life GOP House and Senate candidates had responded to the abortion issue as did Marshall Coleman and Jim Courter.

knows what she's getting into). Pro-choicers should be made to explain why they're against these reasonable restrictions. If they waver and support some of them, they'll catch hell from pro-choice zealots and may switch back. Molly Yard called Wilder a wimp after he criticized abortion for birth control. Wilder dropped the subject, but Coleman failed to exploit the flip-flop. And guess what? Wilder pounded Coleman all the more on rape and incest.

4. *Frame the broad abortion debate in a new way.* For now, pro-choicers are setting the terms. Wilder did this brilliantly in his campaign. In a TV ad produced by Frank Greer, the best of the Democratic media consultants, Wilder said the choice is between a woman's right to decide something that affects her life and politicians' insistence on imposing a decision on her. Who, except pro-life diehards, is going to side with politicians? Not many average voters, I'll wager. As long as the argument is framed this way, the pro-life position is a loser.

Coming up with new terms for the debate is hard. I haven't got a perfect alternative. But what is it that pro-lifers are for? Saving unborn children—babies. The antagonists are those who'd allow the lives of babies to be snuffed out. They could be insensitive politicians, abortionists, Molly Yard, or the woman I saw on the plane to San Francisco. The choice should be presented as one between protecting the lives of babies and allowing crazed feminists to pursue a cruel whim or abortionists to make money or politicians to take the amoral way out.

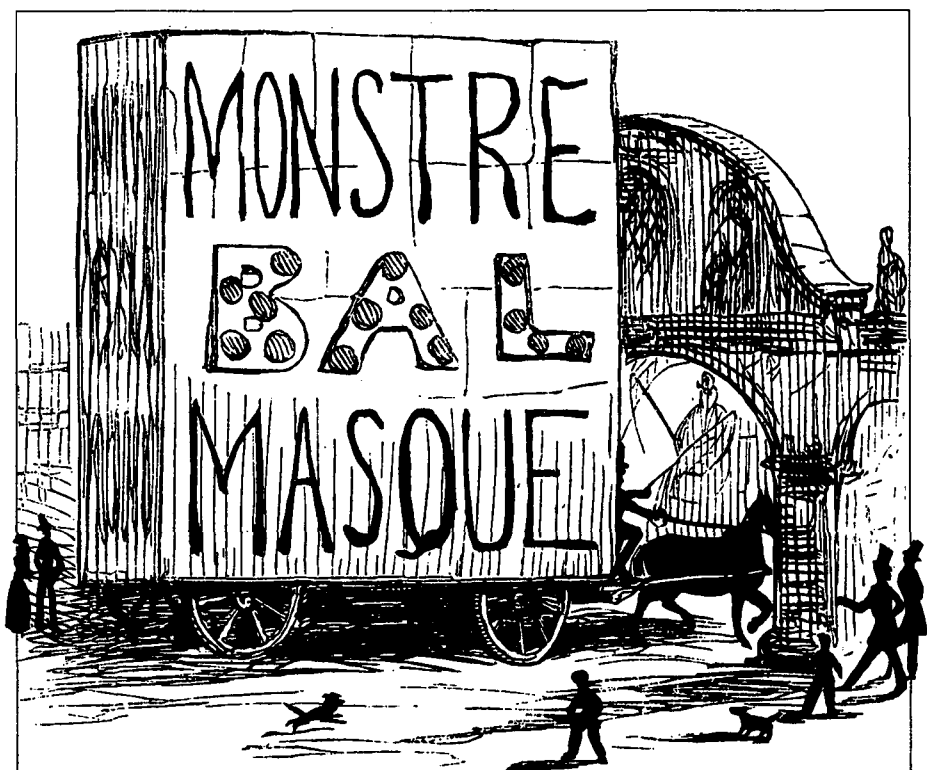
5. *Make the pro-life argument on television.* This is mandatory. The pro-life movement and its allies will never triumph unless they go on the tube. Pro-life Republicans will be vulnerable unless they defend their position on TV. If an opponent airs attack ads on abortion, that's all the more reason to

go with a counter-attack. "Rule 101 in this business is, if you don't answer, it's true," says Robert Goodman, Coleman's media consultant. Television is the only medium for reaching most voters. You'd be surprised how many haven't heard the pro-life side argued aggressively or the pro-choice side dissected critically. Until the 1984 Republican platform hearings, I'd never heard the argument against abor-

ing Coleman on abortion. Goodman crafted an ad with emotional wallop. It showed a happy young mother watching her baby's first step. "A child's first step is a remarkable thing," says the voice-over. "But it would never happen if those who hold an extreme view on abortion have their way. The extreme view that abortion for any reason is all right. The extreme view that permits a parent to abort a child because it happens to be a girl and not a boy. Doug Wilder holds this extreme position on abortion. Thank goodness Virginia asks for something a lot more reasonable." Well, Virginia may have asked, but Coleman never ran this ad. National Right to Life aired one showing babies playing, while an announcer rapped Wilder for favoring unfettered abortion—on demand, for birth control, and in the late stages of pregnancy. This was effective, but not as powerful as Goodman's.

The pro-life case must touch people's hearts. Pro-life activists are willing to try. National Right to Life has one TV spot in which an unborn child is seen supposedly talking. Then comes abortion day. At the end, the terror-stricken child is heard to say: "Mom?" This may be too hokey, but it's on the right track. Another National Right to Life commercial shows a woman watching her daughter in a ballet, a child she almost aborted. This ad is better. But think what Roger Ailes, Sig Rogich, Charlie Black, Elliot Curson, and other Republican media experts might come up with if they joined Goodman in producing anti-abortion ads. These won't be produced unless pro-life Republicans demand them. And that, in turn, requires only one thing of Republicans: the courage of the anti-abortion convictions they've been professing all these years. □

To prevail, pro-lifers must showcase the victims, babies. That's what Goodman wanted to do as early as September, when Wilder began roast-



Christopher Caldwell

NORIEGA INTO THE NINETIES

If, after the failed October coup, General Noriega is here to stay, the hapless people of Panama and the prestige of the United States will suffer irreparably. A report from our man in Panama City.

Panama City

If you're waiting for the next coup in Panama, you're most likely waiting in vain. It will take time for the element of surprise to be a factor in any coup plot, and before any Panamanian opposition trusts the United States' blowy rhetoric. While Major Moises Giroldi had guns trained on General Noriega on October 3, while American helicopters hovered over the Comandancia, waiting to snatch the General off the roof, while Noriega was being herded into a truck, while U.S. troops watched the whole thing from the distance of a Bo Jackson home run, the General somehow faced Giroldi down, as Giroldi's communiqué to U.S. General Marc Cisneros stating that he didn't want Noriega extradited to the United States indicates. Meanwhile, the Batallón 2,000, an elite brigade of the Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF), was roaring down the Transistmica, the "third road," to the Comandancia. "Roaring" may be the wrong word, as some sources say they were taking their time, out of worry that the U.S. might change its mind and commit troops.

It's not true that Noriega opened his shirt to Giroldi's trained guns and said "*¡Matame, Giroldi... si tienes cojones!*" (Kill me, Giroldi... if you have the balls!), but no one doubts it. He is a killer, the real thing—he shot Giroldi personally. He has nothing in common with, say, "the poet" Daniel Ortega, who, however noxious his rhetoric, always looks like a high school physics nerd who's too fond of guns. Whether due to Noriega's innate bravado or the fact that the General is often blitzed—Stolichnaya in the day, Old Parr at night—to the point where one associate describes him as functional about an hour a day, *cojones* is the operative word here, and the man is hung like a belfry. But this man the administration describes as a "thug" is also a formidable autodidact. Other

tyrants express admiration for history's dictators: Noriega studies them; he confides to friends that he considers himself the avatar of Genghis Khan. Any attempt at political change that does not involve at least Noriega's exile is a pipe dream.

Certainly the most un-Panamanian person in Panama, the General knows his people inside-out. Their politeness is exquisite and excessive—people stop their cars in the inner city to allow kids to continue their soccer games, not vice-versa. When Panamanians rallied in March 1988, one man, caught up in the mêlée when the Doberman brigade of the PDF brought out the truncheons and birdshot, made an outraged plea to an American camera crew to (please) come see the scratches on his car. Exactly what went on inside the Comandancia last October will remain a mystery. Weird things happened: Giroldi allowed Noriega to make a telephone call to his mistress, Vicky Amado, and it was she who sent the Batallón 2,000

to the General's rescue. Other than that, all's blurry, but to understand the mix of deference and stark fear that kept Giroldi from shooting Noriega would be to understand much of the Panamanian character and the Panamanian predicament.

Combining the drug trade, international capitalism, international Communism, and a history of U.S.-sponsored military buildup, this is unlike any government before it. Exiled editor of *La Prensa* Roberto Eisenmann describes the Noriega regime as "the world's first narco-military state," working like a mafia rather than a dictatorship. Eisenmann says that Noriega is in so tight with the Medellín cartel and other shady international interests that he can neither step down nor cede the slightest influence to the Panamanian people; this is not the sort of enterprise one "retires" from.

Like the mafia, this "thing" is highly diversified, cloaks itself in a number of legal financial and trading concerns,

and relies heavily on intimidation and rumor. Noriega is a rumor genius, and Panamanians are rumor-crazy. One Panama City businessman told me, "Tell Panamanian A that a friend is sick, and he'll tell Panamanian B that he's dead. Then Panamanian B will tell Panamanian C that he's seen the cadaver." It's not true that Noriega wrote a book on the art of spreading political rumors, but he did write a long and erudite white paper, or something resembling it, for the Torrijos regime. Noriega claims sixteen people died in the coup; the Panamanian opposition in Miami says between 112 and 116; my best Washington sources say between seventy and eighty. In the weeks after the coup, we were told that several of the participating officers had been taken down to the city morgue and frozen to death. True? No, although there was certainly plenty of torture. They just want you to know: *We do this stuff.*

Not that they do this stuff much, by Salvadoran or Colombian standards. Like the mafia, they work by examples, the most famous of which is Dr. Hugo Spadafora. Americans have pretty much forgotten his name since he was tortured and beheaded in October 1985, but Panamanians haven't. I heard him mentioned more often during the coup week than any of the coup conspirators; when Panama has its own currency, you'll see his face on coins. We probably hear so little of him in the United States because he fought for the contras.

Spadafora fell afoul of Noriega for informing the DEA of Noriega's drug dealing and other crimes. Most also agree that Spadafora's aristocratic bearing and striking good looks aroused spasms of jealousy in Noriega, who, whatever his charms, has neither. When Spadafora tried to return to Panama from Costa Rica on September 13, 1985, he was hauled off his bus and subjected to hours and hours of



Christopher Caldwell is a writer and editor living in Washington, D.C.

the most spectacular torture I have ever heard of.

It's a story that has been often repeated, but, as it is the beginning of the end for Noriega, and perhaps for Panama and the Panama Canal treaties, here it is again: the PDF started by working with sharp instruments on Spadafora's fingernails, moved on to a bit of truncheon-work that broke a few ribs, then used the truncheon for a long period on Spadafora's rectum. The high point of the torture involved some delicate and not-so-delicate work on his testicles. Since, as Spadafora's friend Guillermo Sanchez Borbon has written, "holding his legs open in a damp climate such as Panama's would be a messy, sweaty business," the PDF solved the problem by using a machete to sever the tendons in Spadafora's groin. They enjoyed a long, drunken torture orgy during which they dragged a battered Spadafora through a half-dozen Chiriqui beach towns before finally beheading him in Corozo. Then they drove his body back across the Costa Rican border and threw it into a ditch.

Sanchez Borbon has been eloquent on rape and its role in Panamanian politics. When he himself was arrested, he was told by his PDF guards that a dozen AIDS-infected prisoners would be brought in to rape him as soon as it got dark. He said that his greatest hope was that, being in his mid-sixties, he wouldn't appear such a tasty morsel to his potential rapists, but he had no doubt that the requisite homosexuals could, and would, be garnered. But Sanchez Borbon had friends who could make a big deal of this; they sprang him by nightfall and he is now in Miami. The Noriega regime is, weirdly, based on a rape. As a young lieutenant, Noriega raped a Peruvian prostitute and beat her to within an inch of her life. It was Torrijos's intervention that kept Noriega from being ousted from the army and consolidated Noriega's loyalty to, and favored status under, Torrijos.

Subtler forms of humiliation are used. Teachers, who as a class are particularly opposed to Noriega, are now getting visits from PDF officials who tell them they'd end up in a sack at the bottom of the Canal. When Guillermo Endara, leader of the opposition Democratic Alliance, went on a hunger strike September 20, PDF troops spray-painted on the walls of his office, "Out to lunch. . . will be back soon!" (Endara is notoriously fat.) Two days after the coup attempt, after Endara had given a press conference, the PDF raided opposition headquarters and spirited him out the back door. Endara was saved only because a Cuban minister, Tomas Alvarez, who was visiting him from his office across the Pan-

que Porras, called Noriega's office and said that if Endara were harmed there would be hell to pay from Spain and its European and American allies. It is a measure of the international consensus against Noriega that Lozano didn't consult any of those allies first.

Endara fled to the Vatican *nunciatura*, partly because it seemed like the only embassy Noriega wouldn't violate, and partly because there aren't that many ambassadors left to choose

The General is often blitzed—Stolichnaya in the day, Old Parr at night—to the point where one associate describes him as functional about an hour a day.

from in Panama City, where, among American countries, only Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Ecuador recognize the government. Endara continued to issue statements, but he was slow and woozy after two weeks of fasting. Lying in bed with a copy of Gandhi's writings, in a country where *satyagraha* doesn't cut much ice, he looked rather a bozo. He stopped his hunger strike shortly thereafter.

Yet Panamanians want Endara as their president, even though Panamanian presidents have had zero to say about the running of the country for the last few elections. Last May, despite Noriega candidate Carlos Duque's superior publicity and Noriega's attempt to buy out a second candidate to split the opposition, despite the fact that the Democratic Alliance had a shallow political platform aside from being anti-Noriega, the Endara/Ford/Arias Calderon ticket won by a three-to-one margin.

As Eisenmann says of the PDF, "People's hatred of that uniform is profound." (There are actually myriad uniforms, as the PDF is cobbled together out of all the institutions in the country that have guns, including bank guards in David and crossing ladies in Bantico.) And anti-Noriega sentiment in the PDF is vitriolically the same as in the public at large, although it's probably diminished since Noriega purged all but a handful of his senior officers after the coup. Like Noriega, younger officers and soldiers aren't necessarily rock-solid either. During 1987 demonstrations, one soldier was seen carrying a paper bag into a friend's house, where he asked for a glass of water. When the housekeeper asked what was in the bag, he replied, "A change of clothes." No one wanted to bring up the morale factor. But those who know Noriega about the PDF think that the threat

of one or two U.S. armored personnel carriers on the Transistmica last October would have led the PDF to lay down their arms.

During the October crisis, *La Estrella de Panama*, like all papers pro-Noriega, was running AP bulletins out of Washington *uncut*. This is not such a big deal, as Panamanians don't read much: *La Estrella* is the largest paper in this country of 2.2 million, with a circulation of 15,000; the largest newspaper

circulation ever recorded was 60,000-70,000 by *La Prensa* after the Spadafora killing. But Noriega didn't even black out U.S. television transmissions in October, as he did during the March 1988 protests, and it's not hard to see why. Administration officials were sounding dishonest, wimpish, incompetent, or all three. Secretary Baker was saying, "It's up to the Panamanian people to decide." From training Noriega in psychological operations at Fort Bragg to keeping him in the pay of the CIA well after his drug dealing was public knowledge, the United States has done a good deal of "deciding" for the Panamanian people. That these were errors of judgment rather than ill will does not make the

General any less Our Bastard. There is no sentiment in Panama that the U.S. might be keeping Noriega in power as an excuse to abrogate the treaties (as one would expect in this rumor capital), but there is bafflement that the U.S. is not doing anything more to clean up the mess it helped make.

II

The strangest assortment of people pass through Panama: Paul Gauguin helped dig the Canal; the Shah spent some of his last days here; John Wayne married a Panamanian and visited often; and in the early 1960s Dame Margot Fonteyn, greatest of English ballerinas, staged a coup with her husband, Senator Roberto Arias, in a rowboat (a very Panamanian touch). But Panama's international flavor now comes from a pretty shady assortment of Libyan, Israeli, Taiwanese, and other money-launderers. It's still an excellent tax shelter. And, while most of the 80,000-100,000 Colombians who live in Panama are respectable businessmen, who do you think the guys with funny accents and \$6,000 alligator-skin boots are?

They're not the only imports of late—the Sandinista government recently sent a team of five election consultants, not of the Ailes/Squires variety, to Panama to ask how to rig Nicaraguan elections so that international observers wouldn't notice fraud to the extent that they did in Panama last May. Perhaps the February elections are appearing less and less likely, because even

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Noriega couldn't solve the problem.

Taking loot for solving foreigners' problems has been elevated to a fine art under Torrijos and Noriega. Torrijos took \$12 million from the Shah to grant him exile. Earlier in the decade, when Castro was trying through Panama to broaden Cuba's access to the free world's high-tech products and military supply lines, Noriega and his brother Luis Carlos accepted thousands of pro-Castro Cubans at \$3,500 apiece. It reportedly cost Pablo Escobar \$5 million to set up his cocaine refinery in the jungle province of Darien. Libya provided a \$24-million bridge "loan" after the first U.S. sanction package in March 1988. And no one knows who came to the rescue when U.S. sanctions after the fraudulent elections led to a \$50-million cash shortfall and the paychecks of government employees bounced. A Taiwanese consortium is the most reliable answer I've heard, and the Taiwanese are certainly in tight with Noriega. One source claims that 22,000 Chinese have entered Panama in the last two months, and that the going rate for immigration has been upped to \$10,000. Since the death of Luis Carlos Noriega, the booty goes largely to Carlos Castillo, an old *chiricano* friend of Noriega's, whose wife Noriega made director of immigration. The Colon free zone has been turned into a contraband emporium—stereos to Cuba, Italian bicycle parts to Nicaragua, that sort of thing. The government gets only four dollars an item for everything shipped, but it adds up.

America's response to Panamanian excesses has been to sanction. Sanctions are always a blunt instrument, and the Reagan/Bush sanctions on Panama are blunter than most. Panama is in fact self-sanctioning: the economy is off 25 percent, only five percent of which is due to American efforts. There are good sanctions—withholding our \$7-million annual Canal payments, which go right into the General's pocket, and which will be released from escrow to Panama once the regime is over. There are arguable ones—restricting access of Panamanian-registered boats to U.S. ports, which keeps contraband out but bolsters Noriega's hold over the people who make a living out of shipping (i.e., all Panamanians). And there are objectionable ones—withholding payments to Panamanian employees of American companies, which hits poorer Panamanians first. Remember that Panama combines one of the most open ports in the world with a banking system more confidential than Switzerland's; each U.S. disinvestment is a Libyan or a Cuban or a Nicaraguan foothold. Since sanctions have worked about as well in Panama as they have in South Africa, we would do well to remember

the Golden Rule of Sanctions: If it's not worth blockading, it's not worth sanctioning.

For this is the archetypal siphon state, a nation of ten-percenters. When the ten-percenters use the PDF's guns to take 40 percent, there's not much left to go around, and some Panamanians are getting very poor, not-enough-to-eat poor. At 11:30 a.m. on

Those most knowledgeable about the PDF think that the appearance of one or two armored personnel carriers on the Transistmica last October would have led the PDF to lay down their arms.

the Southern Command Network, which serves Americans in the Canal Zone, they pick up "Wheel of Fortune," where gringos smirk nonchalantly at the news that they've won \$17,900, a car, and a mink coat. The Panamanian equivalent, "Estrella de la Fortuna," comes on at 4:30 on Channel 4, and people clap madly when someone wins fifty bucks. On an even more proletarian show, "Alto y Bajo," the game host melodramatically counts out the prize money in grubby little one-dollar bills (*iVeinte! . . . iVeintiuuuuuno!*). On the episode I watched, some guy won twenty-one dollars and a percolator, and the crowd went berserk.

Unemployment in Panama stands at 35 percent. There are no public works going on, no roads being built. The street signs and streetlights that were torn down during the past year's demonstrations have not been replaced (making this a scary place for an American correspondent to drive around alone at night). While Noriega's fortune has grown to half a billion dollars, by some estimates, the national debt now stands at well over five. For Panamanians, drug-dealing, and even

the PDF, pale in comparison to the fact that the Noriega regime is wrecking the economy. Not "depressing": wrecking. Each passing day makes it more likely that Panama will evolve into a permanent gangster state.

Even Noriega's president, Francisco Rodriguez, is beginning to invoke Fidel and 1959, as he did at a pro-Noriega rally I attended at Paitilla Airport on Rodriguez's return from the U.N. Noriega had announced he would dis-

The man glared wildly into my eyes and said: "Two dollars!"

I reached into my pocket and pulled out two loose bills, a ten and a one, gave him the ten, put the one back in my pocket, and walked off. Odd—the tenner was not so much a theft as a consulting fee.

Of course, none of this would keep anyone awake at night if it didn't involve the Panama Canal. We could talk all day about the sloppiness of the Canal treaties. For one, it's strange that President Carter chose Panama as his "proudest achievement," as the treaties weren't even his idea—the first treaty is merely the codification of a declaration signed by President Johnson and President Robles of Panama in 1965. For another, this is still Latin America, and, for all their gentleness, Panamanians respect respect more than kindness. Sanchez Borbon writes of Carter "mewing about Human Rights" while students got clubbed at a nearby university—where *clubbed* does not mean invited to join the Skull 'n' Bones. If the big payback for the Canal treaties was to be the respect of Panamanians and other Latin Americans, then we lost.

There's a huge billboard across the street from the Paitilla Shopping Center that reads, "LOS TRATADOS DEL CANAL DE PANAMA ESTAN MAS SEGUROS CON NORIEGA" (*The Panama Canal treaties are safer with Noriega*). October's events seem to be making propaganda come true. This is not the Panama we thought would be running the Canal, but American policy seems to take no account of the fact that Noriega is not the major problem in the vital matter of our keeping our word to Panama. The problem is an eight-year-old thug state that it will take all of the next decade to unravel. Give it a couple more years, and the gangsters who have already infiltrated the highest echelons of Panamanian commerce will have so institutionalized the way Panama does business that the country will be unrescuable.

Still, breaking faith with a people who have done nothing to deserve it is unconscionable, and we must treat the Panama Canal as Panama's. Nations live by the things they're proudest of: Iceland has had only one armed robbery in its history, Ireland has never invaded another country, and the United States, for a world power, has broken treaties only under extraordinary circumstances. Hopping up and down saying, "Abrogate! Abrogate!" as Sen. Connie Mack is doing, is premature and distasteful, but he is perfectly right to bring attention to the urgency of the situation. The U.S. does not have until 1999 to sort out its plans—it has until about 1991.



cipline and dock the bonuses of the public workers who were dancing and drinking in the streets when his removal was erroneously announced on Panamanian radio—not all of them, only the 42,000 he could identify. When Noriega announces that anyone who does not turn in a traitor is a traitor himself, you'd better attend these rallies. You go, get seen by your boss, drink a can of Soberana, and leave. People were drifting away minutes into Rodriguez's speech. I would hardly call it a show of support—just four or five thousand people trying to keep their jobs.

Two days after the coup, I took a walk through the Casco Viejo, the seventeenth-century neighborhood of Panama City. It reminded me of Puerto Rico's Viejo San Juan, and I felt very safe there. I continued a long way down the Avenida Central until I saw lights flashing down a side street and got curious. So I walked down Calle 25 between some awful-looking apartment blocks and—oops—the PDF barracks. At the bottom of the hill, I asked directions of a man who was sitting with his family. He replied in English: "Here is directions—turn around if you don't want to eat some steel." Then a dozen young men and women jumped off the steps of an apartment building and surrounded me. They asked whether I was military, and even when I said no began to shout some pretty vile things at me. I nervously bade them *hasta luego* and was a few steps away when they surrounded me again and one of them said fiercely: "Hey! Pay me!"

I noticed two PDF guys with M16s not ten yards away, and I suddenly remembered I had about two hundred bucks on me. Pay me? This was the weirdest mugging I had ever been through, and I didn't know how to respond, particularly in Spanish. So I asked: "How much?"

In January the Panama Canal Commission will get a Panamanian majority and a Panamanian head. Noriega is going to nominate publisher Tomas Altamirano, notwithstanding rumors that have appeared in the *New York Times* that the nominee will be Carlos Duque. Altamirano is said to be a capable man, but, as one administration official says, "It doesn't matter if he's the Virgin Mary—that nomination is dead in the water." In February, implementation of the Canal treaties will have been put on hold for the first time.

This will be the first balk in U.S. implementation of the Canal treaties, and the administration must now tread cautiously to keep the move from being misinterpreted in Latin America. American pressure must remain in a multinational context, preferably involving the Latin American alliance known as the Grupo de Ocho (rather, the Grupo de Siete, since the other states voted to expel Panama last October). This would supply an instant international mini-consensus, and squelch any talk of "gringo imperialism." A multinational approach will be vital if it becomes necessary for foreign troops to enter Panama, to guarantee fair elections, for example.

Any future U.S.-backed coup should involve a commitment on the part of the participants to four things: First, elections within a month. Panamanians are literally dying for fair elections, and Panama is not yet so poisoned that democracy is unviable. Second, a demand that the ballot include a plebiscite on the abolition of the PDF, which would pass by margins one associates only with black constituencies in American mayoral elections. Third, a blanket amnesty for all who have profited from the Noriega regime. If this sounds like the Bitburg defense, so be it. In a country of 2.2 million, where everyone knows each other by pet nicknames, it's easy to get someone to cave in to the regime by bringing up the subject of, say, his five-year-old daughter, and there are a lot of decent people caught up in this thing. Guaranteed amnesty would encourage Noriega cronies to jump ship, rather than defend the General under the presumption that their backs were to the wall. Finally, under no circumstances can Noriega remain in Panama.

This doesn't necessarily mean killing him. It could mean negotiating, using the Noriega indictments on drug charges, as was done during secret negotiations in April 1988. At that time, Spain came forward and told the State Department it would accept Noriega if something suitable could be arranged. Negotiations were painstaking. The deal arrived at was that

Noriega would go to Spain and keep all his money (which is in Europe, anyway). That Noriega eventually would have wound up in the Dominican Republic, where his son-in-law Jean Beauchamp is a successful French "businessman," is beside the point. The United States would drop the indictments.

Importantly, Noriega was to be allowed to stay in Panama for another month, so his departure would not be connected with the State Department talks—he was adamant that no one get the impression that he had left at the gringos' behest. But someone leaked. Some people say it was the State Department, which is preposterous—the team, led by Michael Kozak, had nothing to gain by it, and, given that Secretary Shultz was in Europe at the time, they did a spectacular job of arriving at a good deal. Whatever the case, the details of the secret agreement were leaked and, on April 29, 1988, the *Washington Post* ran a cover story elaborating the agreement in minute detail. Noriega panicked and pulled out. The State Department says privately that it is no longer remotely possible that they will drop the indictment ("This is a *was*, not an *is*," said one official). And the new guidelines for overthrow of foreign dictators are basically a matter of keeping Senate subcommittees from playing CIA.

A drawback to the drug indictment is the real possibility that Noriega could be acquitted. Lest this sound alarmist, consider the case of Roberto Suarez Levy, as reported by Guy Gugliotta and Jeff Leen in *Kings of Cocaine*. Suarez was arrested with 854 pounds of cocaine in Miami in 1981. His father, Roberto Suarez Gomez, who was Bolivia's largest raw cocaine producer and is now in jail for it in Bolivia, tried to cut an interesting deal—release my son and I'll *pay off the Bolivian national debt*. He needn't have bothered, as a Miami jury rejected the testimony of four DEA officers. Suarez Levy walked.

In a country with *habeas corpus*, what could we say should that happen with Noriega? "We're going to hang onto you for the hell of it"? Noriega has the drug millions to hire crack legal advisers and—to be frank—buy jurors. As the Oliver North case shows, any trial involving a prominent figure presupposes a brain-dead jury, who could effectively hold our Central American policy and our "war on drugs" hostage. Not that the administration isn't doing a good enough job of that itself, particularly in Panama, where we're playing a game of *¿Quien es mas macho?* with someone who knows the rules far better than we. □

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MOZART GOES AMERICAN

Introducing Figaro the eggthrower, Don Alfonso the Vietnam vet, and Don Giovanni the black drug dealer. Yet strangely enough, Peter Sellars's recent offerings were as memorable as any operatic productions you're likely to see these days.

Some fifty years after Orson Welles set *Macbeth*—Shakespeare's, not Verdi's—in Haiti during the reign of Emperor Jean Christophe, the theatrical avant garde has turned its attentions upon opera, and the lyric stage will never be the same. In most every art iconoclasm has of course always been the fundamental tenet of modern orthodoxy, indisputable as the voice from the whirlwind; and it was inevitable that this iconoclasm should find its way at last to the only art where there was anything left to smash.

The operatic stage director of significant audacity or, for that matter, of startling impudence, is taking on that certain luster which used to gild the prima donna, the great conductor, and, at one time, even the composer. Peter Sellars is the most famous opera director in America—really the only one anybody who is not an opera-going regular can be expected to have heard of—and he owes his celebrity precisely to his untiring outlandishness. At the PepsiCo Summerfare in Purchase, New York, this past season, he presented the supreme tour de force of his still youthful career: his emphatically American staging of the three operas that Mozart composed to Lorenzo da Ponte's librettos was a cultural event as momentous as any premier of a new opera in some years. Boldly reconsidering each detail of the most familiar works in the repertory, Sellars makes every opera he directs as modern as all get out, and he set *Le Nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*, first performed in 1786) on the fifty-second floor of Trump Tower, *Così fan tutte* (1791) in a seaside diner, and *Don Giovanni* (1787) in Spanish Harlem.

Although Sellars, at thirty-one, continues to be spoken of as an *enfant terrible*—and according to his many detractors what is not merely infantile in his work is simply terrible—in the

pursuit of interpretative novelty he in fact takes markedly after some of his elders. Opera has yet to shake its reputation as the most conservative of the performing arts; however, for some time now, especially in Europe, but also increasingly in America, the order of the day has been the transmogrification of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century operatic masterpieces into something that only the late twentieth century could produce. *Così fan tutti*? No, they don't all do it, or at least not all the time, or not yet anyhow. A pack of them do, though, every chance they get.

Already in operatic staging there exist certain conventional forms of innovation. There is meta-fictional opera: an apparently straightforward story revealed to be a play within a play, or a dream within a play, or a play within a dream. There is hyper-realism: a baptismal immersion in an extravagance of squalor; the reduction of the mysteries of love and death to the pertinent neural and endocrine processes;

opera to be shrieked rather than sung. Not to be confused with *verismo*—the late nineteenth-century Italian movement that was actually not about realism so much as it was about the tenor's high notes—hyper-realism represents a profound imaginative collaboration between the director and forensics experts from the coroner's office: it is the high art equivalent of the snuff film. And then, most important, there is politically charged anachronism: the action dislocated from its original setting and recast either in the time and place of the opera's composition, or in the here and now, or somewhere in the blighted radioactive future. The here and now tends to be the pedagogical instrument of choice, lending itself so agreeably to the revelatory purposes of a politically incisive intelligence, enabling one to lay bare the intricate and generally unsuspected connections between, say, Spain during the Inquisition and Fort Wayne under the Bush regime.

Within these new interpretative boundaries, there is room for all kinds of maneuver, after a fashion. Over the past three years, Virginia Opera has set *Carmen* in Tijuana, with death-courting *pachuco* boys wheeling around on motorcycles; the Bonn Oper, in Franco's Spain, with *Carmen* stabbed to death in a hotel room and Micaela vomiting into a sink at the sight; and the English National Opera, in a surreal automobile junkyard, with a squad of pom-pom girls cheering on the toreador Escamillo. Arkansas Opera Theater has put on a 1930s Caribbean *Rigoletto*: the hunchbacked jester became a bartender, the Duke of Mantua, the nefarious boss man. At West Berlin's Deutsche Oper, the Duke passed up the usual court entertainments in order to practice alchemy in a cemetery while some of his courtiers fornicated—if that is the correct technical term here—with skeletons. (For some reason *Rigoletto* has become an avant-garde favorite in the German-speaking countries. The *Opera News* reviewer in West Germany was flummoxed recently by a conventional staging of the opera; he had forgotten that such a thing was possible.)

Among the gentle Swedes, Puccini's *Turandot*, the Chinese princess who poses her suitors three riddles to try their worthiness, and who has twenty-seven of them beheaded for answering wrong, turned out to be a victim of child abuse. *Tosca*, the tragic voice of freedom lost, has bitten the dust in Mussolini's Rome, by way of the English National Opera, and, courtesy of New Jersey's Hollybush Festival, in Reagan's Central America, where the villainous Scarpia was a U.S. military adviser working a computer terminal in a hotel penthouse. Boito's *Mefistofele*, as Ken Russell conjured him in Genoa, insinuated his way into the edenic household of Faust and Margherita disguised as a vacuum cleaner salesman. Faust was a hippie willing to take his transcendence wherever he



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could get it; Margherita, after killing her baby, chopped it into pieces and stashed them in the freezer, as Betty Crocker might do in a Sam Shepard play; the vacuum cleaner hose turned itself into the well-known serpent in the garden; and E.T. stole the show with a cameo appearance in a non-singing role. (Singers really hate it when that happens.)

In Geneva, Berlioz's *Les Troyens* was set in the aftermath of nuclear war, most likely upon the urging of the local Chamber of Commerce, which of course banks heavily on the disarmament trade from out-of-town. *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Wagner's *Ring*, and Cavalli's *La Calisto* are among the operas that have gotten the plutonium treatment elsewhere, although accounts of the Cavalli production in Santa Fe last summer suggest it really had less to do with Armageddon than with cross-dressing, just as the composer intended.

There is no foreseeable end to this kind of thing. Once everything is permitted, as the Marquis de Sade was among the first to understand, whatever can be done will be done. In the innovative spirit of the Marquis, who undertook to imagine and perhaps even to induce every pleasure and every pain the human body could possibly know, every operatic masterpiece will eventually be rendered in every conceivable setting of sufficient geopolitical piquancy of mythopoeic cachet. The swelling future holds the voodoo *Zauberflöte*; *Traviata* among the Clay People; *Bohème* as aboriginal vegetation rite; and *Boris Godunov* with the title role sung by a countertenor in a Dan Quayle mask. Laugh if you want to; but don't bet against it.

There is an overriding reason for this superabundance of novelty. As in the other arts—for that matter, as in every aspect of modern life—simple boredom on the audience's part requires for its relief continual applications of excitement, however inane it might be. In the absence of new operas (or anyhow of new operas that audiences want to hear; after all, there is boredom, and then there is numbing tedium unto death), something new has to be done to the old ones. A somewhat more complicated boredom on the producer's end complements the consumers' need for snazzier entertainments: this is the boredom of the intelligentsia known as post-modernism, which consists of a principled disaffection with virtually all of civilization as we know it, and of a proud fascination with one's own ability to see through the vast elaborate cultural edifice and to discern its foundation of yet more elaborate untruth. Art types and in-

tellectuals who don't know anything else know that racist, classist, and sexist assumptions underlie every purported truth and beauty, while those subtler still have been indoctrinated into the meaninglessness of all deconstructed meaning, including their own.

Fifteen years ago, this kind of talk was strictly academic, and arcane even among professors; now persons with but the slightest pretense to cultivation—in fact, such persons especially—take these notions for granted. On the operatic stage, these notions are embodied in productions that tend to be daftly earnest in their promotion of

Sellers's characteristic method superimposes American modernity upon the world of the opera he is directing, so that the original necessarily appears distorted.

correct thinking, or relentlessly puckish in their travesty of any pieties whatsoever, or some of both.

Those that are some of both, like Peter Sellers's, offer the variegated pleasures of a night at the opera with all the Marx Brothers: Harpo, Chico, Groucho, and Karl. It is Karl, of course, who gets the really big laughs. Sellers is very much a man of the left, an ardent polemicist, and he can be terribly funny in his most solemn moments. The lengthy program notes and plot summaries that Sellers wrote for his production of the Mozart-da Ponte operas constitute a pronouncement on the class struggle that would make a Rumanian secret policeman break out in giggles. Sellers's rhetoric is flavored with both the imperturbable moral smugness of the Harvard seminar room and the breathless added fervor of Bughouse Square, circa 1930: "Socially the operas have hardly dated. The class system that Mozart wrote about remains in place two hundred years later in the New World ask Leona Helmsley's maid [sic]." One might almost be convinced, if only Mrs. Helmsley could arrange for her maid to do her time for her.

Ultimately, however, Sellers's historical analysis does not stand or fall on the question of whether one rich bitch who cheats on her taxes gets what she deserves. There are far greater matters for Sellers to trip over: "And, let's face it, in the America of the 1980s, as in the Vienna of the 1780s, the ancien regime is crumbling, whether it cares to admit it or not. . . . So now, America is turning right as the rest of the world is turning left, and the historic moment is passing from our hands into the hands of others who have been waiting a long time." This is under-

standing of a lofty order, attainable only by persons who know their intellectual breeding to be so far above reproach that they never actually have to think about anything.

To anyone who has troubled to think, it is apparent that the political ascendancy during the 1980s of American conservatism—typically American, typically democratic, in its moderation—has speeded the crumbling of various tyrannies, fascist and socialist alike, including some foul regimes that prudence required we make our allies, and it has helped to inspire a burgeoning passion for

democracy throughout the world. Of course, when Sellers writes of "the more urgent idealism" that will inherit the earth, or seize it, the heroism he exalts is clearly not that of Lech Walesa or Violetta Chamorro or the demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, but rather that of the liberators leading the great leftward turning: Ortega and Qaddafi and Mengistu Mariam, the PLO and the African National Congress and the Sendero Luminoso. Compared with certain intellectual high crimes, the mere desecration of operatic masterpieces seems a slight thing.

Fortunately for the operas themselves, Sellers committed his gravest offenses against them in his program notes. The actual productions did have their faults—there were puerile or ill-considered touches here and there, some of the mannerisms got irksome after a while—and *Così* was severely flawed—but for the most part, they were dazzling. Superb in stagecraft, riveting in the intense specificity of the singing actors' portrayals, bearing the mark of an estimable directorial intelligence, these were worthy and serious efforts to illuminate Mozart's genius, however remote and singular the vantage from which Sellers viewed the operas.

Mozart's four greatest operas, the three collaborations with da Ponte and the one with Schickaneder, *Die Zauberflöte*, or *The Magic Flute*, are among the masterpieces of the democratic epoch in the hopeful splendor of its youth; they both reflect and reflect upon the new age and its prevailing beliefs. The principal theme of these operas, and an incessant preoccupation of democratic art and thought, at least

in the days of democracy's emergence, is nobility: what nobility truly consists in, once the artificial distinctions among men that exist in an aristocratic society are done away with. The operas show what happens to nobility as an aristocratic society understands it when it runs full tilt into certain disconcerting forces of nature. In particular, the operas examine nobility as it manifests itself in private life: in the relations between masters and servants, and above all between lovers, or husband and wife.

Mozart knew well the disorder that life in an aristocratic regime engendered in the soul: how it perverted honorable feeling into corrosive vanity and lust for power among the nobly born and into blinding resentment among the common. He employed a wealth of musical nuance to expose this disorder: one hears the comical preening fury of Bartolo, as he alternates between trumpeting rage and self-congratulatory patter that evokes a preposterous triumphant strut; the chilling *amour-propre* in Count Almaviva's eroticism, as the arching *legato* phrases that delineate his longing crumple under the sharp *marcato* buffets of his suffering pride; the anger behind Figaro's servile decorum, as the masterly calm with which he tells himself he will get the better of the Count gives way to a ferocious bellow of vengeance.

Mozart also knew how difficult it is to free oneself from such disorder. What he understood more deeply and rendered more poignantly than any other artist is the agony of disillusion that one must undergo in order clearly to distinguish genuine nobility from its common imitators. He saw that, while for some people this disillusion might be the prerequisite to happiness, as in *The Marriage of Figaro*, for others it is the beginning of bewilderment or even despair, as in *Così Fan Tutte*. He wrote operatic music that exposes men for fools; that searches the tragic pain of discovering oneself to be a fool; and that offers, in most cases, forgiveness, which may or may not include salvation or consolation or the hope of changing one's wretched life.

In *The Marriage of Figaro*, the Count Almaviva, who once loved his wife but who is bored with his marriage, lusts after his wife's maid, Susanna; she is engaged to the Count's servant, Figaro. In the Count's feckless pursuit of Susanna, and in his fear that his wife is betraying him with the young courtier Cherubino, the Count sees the beloved image of his own nobility smashed; only when he is reduced to begging his wife's forgiveness does he manage to recover his true nobility. The Count is a tyrant tyrannized by his own lust and pride, and in Sellers's production he was as loathsome a specimen

of moral gargoyle as the world will allow, rivaled to my mind only by the Count I once saw in an East German television production of the opera. In the throes of his need for Susanna, Sellars's Count writhed on the floor and caressed himself, like a masturbatory snake that had sprouted hands. This was a man born to be guillotined, and more than once. Yet Sellars did not deny him the possibility of true regeneration; there was nothing to suggest that his repentance was anything less than genuine, that the change in his soul was only a temporary aberration.

The other main characters were similarly pitched toward hysteria, and their salvation was all the sweeter for the bitterness of the misery they had endured. The Countess was a woman in ceaseless mourning for her lost happiness, weeping in bed, immobilized by unabating grief. Susanna moved in a horrified daze, like someone walking away from a terrible car wreck, yet she possessed the uncanny grace of a ministering angel: during the duet "*Sull'aria*," she led the Countess in an exquisite swirling dance, compelling her as by magic to follow her movements.

Figaro was sullen and smoldering, and he ignited when he came upon the Count and Cherubino and Basilio all in pursuit of Susanna. "*Non piu andrai*," customarily Figaro's taunting but not unaffectionate adieu to Cherubino, whom the jealous Count is sending off to the wars, became a heroic tantrum. As Figaro sang, he strewed garbage on the floor, hurled eggs at the Count, and captured Basilio in a sofa-bed that sprang shut like a bear-trap. This madcap fantasy of rebellion—it could not have been anything more than that—was the climax of Figaro's political career; significantly, it took place at the end of the first act. Sellars took the opportunity to indulge his own revolutionary inclinations, but he honored Mozart's understanding that the ecstasy of revolution would not cure the torment of the human heart. During the final act, Figaro was to lie, curled up and shivering, on the ledge of a balcony fifty-two stories above the street, wrongly believing Susanna unfaithful, and despairing as deeply as the Count or Countess. The production ended in a starburst of joyous exuberance, but it showed, far more acutely than any other I've seen, how Mozart's most exultant laughter is giddy with the exhilaration of tragedy barely averted.

If *The Marriage of Figaro* shows comedy eluding tragedy, by a hair's breadth, as a fly eludes a flyswatter, *Così Fan Tutte* shows comedy developing inexorably into tragedy, as several laughing flies get flattened. A cynical

nobleman, Don Alfonso, bets two young friends of his, Guglielmo and Ferrando, that the women they love and esteem as supremely virtuous are in fact like the rest of them, and will be unfaithful the first chance they get. Sadly, he proves that the noble love the young lovers profess is empty talk. *Così* is a work of bitter sorrow, in its understanding that, once love has been stripped of its noblest illusions, nothing remains that is worthy of the name of love.

Even so, Sellars's version was ludicrously glum and, from the start, in the

on reflection one has to remark the hole blasted through the center of this production, by misguided ideological mortar fire.

Of Sellars's three Mozart productions, *Don Giovanni* was the most remarkable, and the most heartbreaking. Giovanni was a black drug dealer, himself an addict, who possessed a terrible allure for white girls of respectable background. The Commendatore was gunned down when he came to Harlem looking for the man who'd ruined his daughter. Don Ottavio, a policeman, plunged his hand into the

ing his own aristocratic sexual privilege: he is rousing himself to attempt to rape the peasant girl Zerlina. However, in 1787, "*Viva la libertà*," even in Giovanni's mouth, must have rung with the hope of democratic revolution that would do away with Giovanni and his kind, for good. In Sellars's updated consideration, as Giovanni and his followers boogied half-naked in the street, one saw what this hope had come to: in the name of absolute liberty, the tyranny of the body's pleasure had laid hold of the democratic soul, and was not about to let go.

Arkansas Opera Theater has put on a 1930s Caribbean *Rigoletto*: the hunchbacked jester became a bartender, the Duke of Mantua, the nefarious boss man.

service of fashionable politics. Don Alfonso was a zombified Vietnam vet who swigged rotgut from a paper bag; he had bought a diner a few years back, and now manned the cash register while his unhappy girlfriend, Despina, did the real work. (In the Mozart-da Ponte rendition of the story, Despina was the young sisters' maid and was no match for Alfonso.) In Sellars's view, Alfonso's experience of war, his understanding of the terrible lie at the heart of public life, had disabled him in love, destroyed any chance of private happiness. There is no such suggestion in the original. This adventitious explanation of motive, this equation of political disgust with erotic disenchantment, was an intrusive touch that skewed Sellars's entire production. There was a great deal to be admired in this *Così*, yet one could admire it only if one pretended to ignore Alfonso whenever he was onstage, which was of course rather often. Sometimes the brilliant touches were fascinating enough that one could do just that, but

Commendatore's blood to swear vengeance for the murder and for Donna Anna's rape—actually, it was Donna Anna who pressed his hand into her father's blood—but he could not be certain that she had in fact been raped; singing "*Dalla sua pace*," he held a gun to his own head, and when Giovanni later sauntered defiantly past him, Ottavio, cowed, looked away.

As it turned out, Ottavio's suspicion that there might have been something between Donna Anna and Giovanni was correct, at least in part: her "*Non mi dir*" was a confession that it was her own drug habit that had brought her to Harlem. Donna Elvira had a touch of mischief in her, too: she was unmistakably a party child, with a taste for feral pleasures. Sellars made it plain that those who most hated the foul Giovanni and who ached for vengeance were themselves responsible to a significant degree for the harm they had suffered at his hands.

There was depravity enough to go around, in this dark world. One could not but be reminded—although it is highly unlikely that this comparison is what Sellars had in mind—of Saul Bellow's caustic Mr. Sammler reflecting, back in 1970, on the contemporary taste for the most virulent forms of noble savagery: "Millions of civilized people wanted oceanic, boundless, primitive, neckfree nobility, experienced a strange release of galloping impulses, and acquired the peculiar aim of sexual niggerhood for everyone."

Sellars is no Sammler, but his *Don Giovanni* envisioned a society destroying itself in its passion for a demented wild nobility that promises liberty utterly without bound—a false nobility conceived by democracy in its most reckless folly. When Giovanni sings the praises of liberty, he is in fact declar-

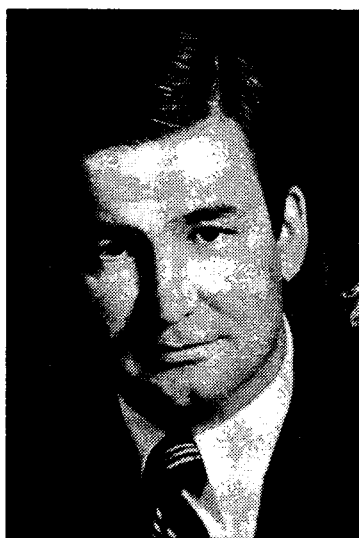
What gave Sellars's *Don Giovanni* its unusual dramatic force was Giovanni's struggle, however inadequate, however doomed, to regain his own soul. He had the pathos of a man whose depravity is virtually irredeemable yet who cannot rid himself of the hope that he might still be saved, and by a woman's love. This noble hope of Giovanni's Sellars probably owed in some part to that extraordinary figure of German romanticism E.T.A. Hoffmann—the A. in Hoffmann's name was his own emendation, and it stands for Amadeus, as in Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart—although in Hoffmann's telling of the Don Giovanni story it was the failed hope of sublime earthly love that inspired Giovanni's demonic sexual rampage, while in Sellars's it was precisely amid his worst debaucheries that Giovanni hoped for such love most fervently, most painfully.

This Giovanni clearly fell in love, if only for a moment, with Zerlina—a Korean girl of radiant decency, about to get married. Of their duet "*La ci darem la mano*," commonly performed as a piece of blithe cynicism on Giovanni's part, Sellars observed in his program notes, "Two lonely and frightened people long to taste again the pain of innocent love." Giovanni presently composed himself, went about the customary business of seduction, then finally decided simple rape was what he was in the mood for; when the partying crowd came to Zerlina's aid, however, and she called down heaven's vengeance on Giovanni, he collapsed before his accusers, and could not get back up. He was to collapse again later, after singing "*Deh vieni alla finestra*," serenading a woman who never came to the window, who was not there to answer his deepest need. The scene was a haunting one, and there were many in this production of comparable power. This *Don Giovanni* will not likely be surpassed any time soon for intelligent boldness and profound seriousness.

However one might hope that it will.
(continued on page 24)



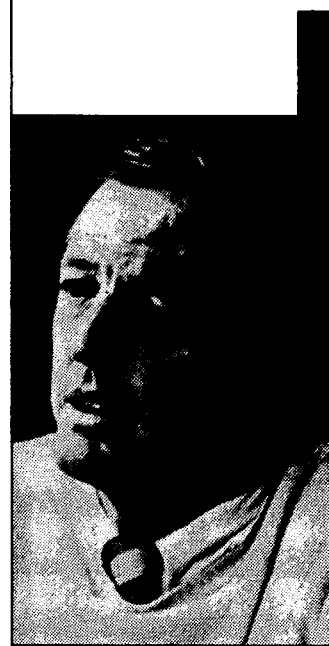
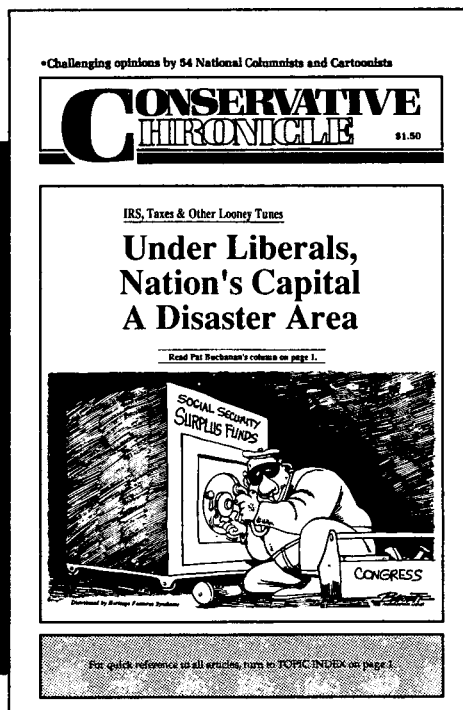
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For a caviling voice will insist that this was not Mozart's *Don Giovanni* but Sellars's; and that voice will be right, or right enough anyway that it must be listened to. Sellars's best work as an opera director reminds one of those exceedingly free poetic translations by Robert Lowell that he called imitations: renderings of Sappho, Rimbaud, Pasternak in a modern American idiom, and indeed in Lowell's own distinctive

voice. They are disfigurements of the original, but inspired disfigurements; one can admire them for what they are, so long as one does not pretend they are the real thing.

It would be pointless to insist that such things must not be done, for there they are; and in any event the reader who looks intently at the Lowell might well find his understanding of the Sappho or Rimbaud or Pasternak deep-

ened. Sellars's characteristic method superimposes American modernity upon the world of the opera he is directing, so that the original necessarily appears distorted.

After one has accounted for the distortion, however, one can often perceive the original all the more clearly through Sellars's lens. The vogue in operatic staging that Sellars represents is becoming a tiresome

business, but Sellars himself at the top of his form is illuminating and inspiring: when someone with superior theatrical intelligence and purer interpretative motives comes along and does the best thing a director can do—render Mozart as he understood himself, in a production one cannot take one's eyes off—he will probably see through Sellars in order to do so. □

Maurice Cranston

SOUTH AFRICA BETWEEN APARTHEID AND DEMOCRACY

Under the republic's new president everyone knows there's no going back. Although it's unclear what increased liberty will bring, for the time being it's possible to be optimistic.

It is generally agreed that F. W. de Klerk has made a good start as president of South Africa. He allowed anti-apartheid marches of the kind his predecessor, President Botha, always suppressed in the big cities. He abolished the use of whips by the police in controlling riots. He reprieved several terrorists from the death penalty. He released leaders of the African National Congress from prison and allowed their supporters to hold a mass rally in Soweto. He saw to it that Johannesburg desegregated the buses, swimming pools, and other public facilities. He allowed black demonstrations to take place on "whites-only" beaches. He opened a dialogue on reform with religious dignitaries, including Desmond Tutu, Allan Boesak, and Frank Chikhahe. But of course he has not yet introduced that thing which people in South Africa, like those in China and Poland and East Germany, have been demanding so forcefully this past year: democracy.

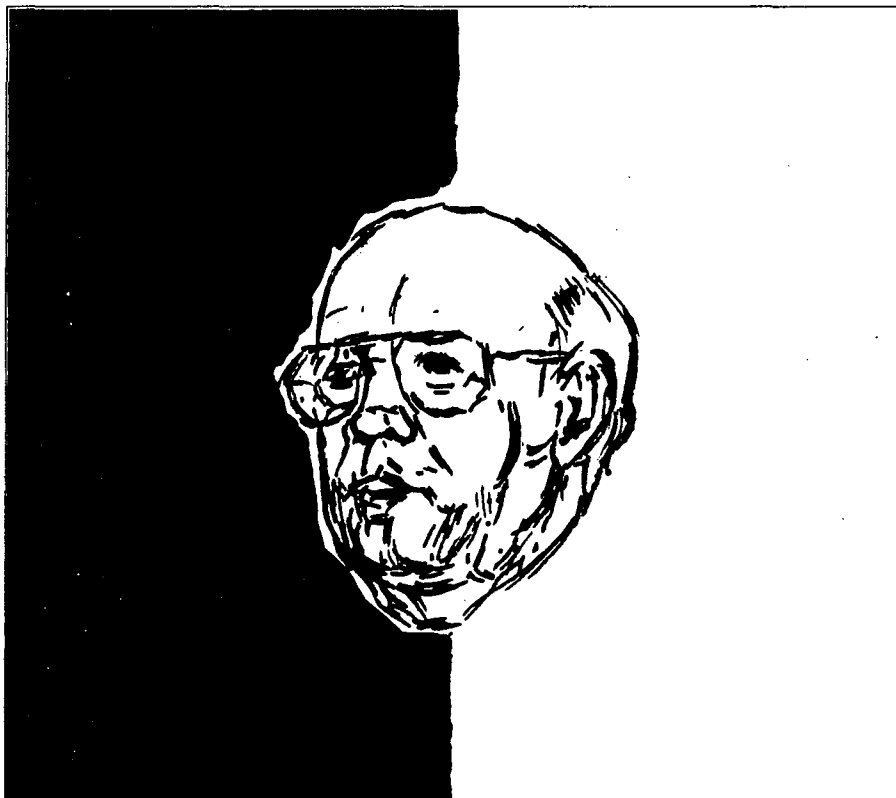
Some people say De Klerk never will. But my reading of the situation, touring South Africa after the September parliamentary elections, is that the momentum toward democracy is irreversible. There is nothing in De Klerk's previous record to indicate that it would be his destiny to initiate such a transformation of the country. He was always the pragmatist and visibly ambitious as he sided with one faction

after another in his climb to office. But he comes from a family that is both cultured and enlightened. His elder brother, Professor W. A. de Klerk, is a founder of the Democratic party and in October took part in a meeting in London with exiled officials of the African National Congress, the black nationalist body that has long been banned in South Africa. President de Klerk looks as if he's becoming one of those enigmatic figures in politics, such as Disraeli and De Gaulle, who come in from the right to steal the clothes of the left.

It is not simply a question of what De Klerk wants to do, but of what he will have to do after the September elections. His National party saw its majority reduced from eighty to thirty, and even that majority is fragile. The party that calls itself Conservative, although it is really a reactionary party, opposed to any dilution of apartheid, captured from the National party six out of thirteen seats in the Orange Free State alone and won 457,966 votes in the Transvaal compared to the National party's 534,138. But the predominant swing in the election was to the Demo-

cratic party, which calls for universal suffrage in a federal republic. All three of its leaders—Zac de Beer, Denis Worrall, and Wynand Malan—are now M.P.'s and De Klerk is sure to find himself increasingly dependent on their support in parliament. The more the defenders of apartheid frustrate his reformist plans, the more he will need the votes of the thirty-three Democrats who now sit in the House of Assembly in order to keep himself in office. The more he needs them, the stronger will be their pressure to speed up change.

We can expect the struggle to become fairly embittered, even in a parliamentary body composed exclusively of whites. The history of South Africa has always been one of conflict between whites no less than of discrimination against people of other races. The first European settlers were Dutch Calvinists, who colonized the Cape with the aid of French and German Protestant refugees. Several generations later a new wave of English-speaking immigrants arrived and the British government promptly annexed the Cape to its empire. The original settlers, having achieved a distinct identity as Afrikaners, resisted and moved north on "treks" to found new republics in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. When the British pursued them they had to fight for their independence in two Boer Wars. At that time they were universally admired for their plucky resistance to the mighty British army. Young Franklin Delano



Maurice Cranston is professor of political science at the London School of Economics.

Roosevelt, for example, was so moved by the Afrikaners' cause that he conceived that lifelong hatred of European imperialism which prompted him to side with Stalin against Churchill and De Gaulle during World War II. Defeat in battle, however, forced the Afrikaner leaders to agree in 1910 to the merging of their states in a Union of South Africa, as a dominion of the British Empire.

In Pretoria today there are two buildings that can be seen as symbols of this conflict: the grandiose imperial palace in Roman style overlooking the fertile and gold-rich acres of the Transvaal and, down in the city itself, the modest house of Paul Kruger, the hero of Afrikaner independence, filled with the emblems of republican liberty and works of Holy Scripture. White men in South Africa were long divided by these two ideologies: the liberal imperialism of the British promising to unite all races in common subjection to a distant sovereign, and the republicanism of the Afrikaners aiming to build a Christian commonwealth on the model of Calvin's own Geneva, in which citizens would rule themselves as free men and others for their own good. Both these ideologies have had their moments of triumph, and both are now history. The age of liberal imperialism ended when the National party won the election of 1948 and transformed the Union into a Republic. Kruger's ideal of an all-Afrikaner state is doomed today by the force of numbers. There are simply too many people of other races in South Africa for the Afrikaners, or even the entire white minority of 4.5 million, to keep a whole nation of 24 million in tutelage, especially as that percentage is predicted to fall progressively with every new generation.

So long as politics in South Africa could be limited to white men, the Afrikaners had numbers on their side. Although the British now berate the Afrikaners for not giving the vote to every black, they did not themselves, when they were in command, allow the natives, as they were then called, to have anything more than token representation by white men in parliament. Since Afrikaner families produced more children than English-speaking families, the Afrikaner electorate had become more numerous than the English-speaking electorate by 1948, and this enabled the Afrikaner National party to win its majority. It is ironic to reflect that if the British had given votes to the blacks, the Nationalists would never have come to power, and the world would never have heard the word "apartheid."

It must be said, however, that although the Afrikaner Nationals introduced the word, they did not introduce

the practice it names. Racial discrimination and separation were well and truly installed under earlier regimes. The first Dutch rulers in the seventeenth century planted groves to isolate white habitations from those of blacks and made racial intermarriage illegal. The British went even further, notably under the high-minded Liberal government of Mr. Asquith, which instituted the Native Land Act of 1913 forbidding the sale of land to blacks, except in reserves which covered only eight percent of South Africa's surface area. Black farmers who had previously prospered on holdings of many hundred acres were allowed to hold no more than ten acres, and that on lease. The liberalism of Asquith's England

President de Klerk looks as if he's becoming one of those enigmatic figures in politics, such as Disraeli and De Gaulle, who come in from the right and steal the clothes of the left.

was wholly directed to reconciliation with the Afrikaners, and the top brass of the Afrikaner military, including the philosopher-general Jan Smuts, responded eagerly to those advances. The majority of ordinary Afrikaners, however, unable to forget the 26,000 who had died during the second Boer War in British concentration camps, were no more disposed to yield to the British blandishments than were the Catholic Irish in Ireland.

Besides, the British in their wisdom had installed in South Africa as governor another philosopher, one Alfred Milner, who, having been born and schooled in Germany, tried to be more British than the British, and set about forcing everyone in South Africa to learn to speak English, prohibiting the use of the Afrikaans language in schools and other public institutions. This perhaps did more than anything else to nourish the passions of Afrikaner nationalism, which was directed first by the clergy of the Dutch Reformed Church and afterward by the semi-freemasonic cultural society, the Broederbond.

Hence, although Smuts was able to carry South Africa into the two World Wars on the British side, his overthrow by the Nationalists in 1948 was not wholly surprising. But it was a precarious victory for the Nationalists, who promptly made systematic efforts to consolidate their supremacy by keeping English-speakers out and the non-white races down: the first by blocking European immigration so as to perpetuate the Afrikaner majority on the electoral

roll, and the second by depriving blacks of the status of nationality so that they could never be promoted to citizenship. Even so, the Nationalist majority remained slender; in the plebiscite on the transformation of South Africa from a British dominion into a republic, 850,458 voted for a republic and 775,878 voted against.

For forty years, the South African regime has been an all-Afrikaner regime. Until Mr. de Klerk formed his administration there was never more than one English-speaking minister in the cabinet. The state became an Afrikaner state; the English-speaking whites held on to what Hegel called civil society—the industrial, commercial, cultural, and academic institutions

which have continued to be run for the most part by non-Afrikaner whites, including those of Jewish origin. Meanwhile, the bureaucracy and all the nationalized corporations have been packed with Afrikaners, who have also maintained their old supremacy in agriculture, which is itself so regulated and so heavily subsidized as to count as a part of the state.

South Africa is a rich country, enjoying excellent universities, schools, mines, factories, roads, refineries, vineyards, hotels, and restaurants; and since the climate is ideal and the magnificent natural beauty of the land is matched by no other country except the United States, it has much that would attract the visitor—if the immigration laws, on the one side, and the anti-apartheid boycotts on the other, did not keep people away. In fact one has hardly any sense of racial tensions in South Africa today such as one observes, for example, in Washington, D.C. The blacks are cheerful and friendly, and although South Africa is a "police state" with a shocking record of repression, one seldom sees a policeman. The truth is that the police forces are seriously undermanned. Moreover, they include, out of 64,000 officers, more than 40,000 who are either black or Colored (the South African name for the community of mixed-race people who for the most part inhabit the Cape). Some of these non-white officers have lately protested openly against police brutality, and it is doubtful that President de Klerk could rely indefinitely on such a multi-racial force to put down rebellion in the way that President Botha did, even if he wanted to. Even the army, to which

whites alone are drafted for compulsory service, is heavily dependent on black volunteers.

Generally, De Klerk seems to have learned the lessons of Botha's failures, both in the use of violence and in the introduction of fruitless reforms. Botha's creation in 1984 of parliamentary houses to represent the Indians and Coloreds notoriously failed to satisfy those two communities because the powers assigned to their houses were vacuous—so that only 20 percent of those eligible chose to vote in the last elections to them. At the same time Botha enraged the vastly more numerous black community—their population being 15 million compared to the 2.5 million Coloreds and 700,000 Indians—by denying them even a dummy legislative chamber. Political science owes to Alexis de Tocqueville the observation that in critical situations ill-judged reforms generate revolution rather than tranquillity.

President Botha's intentions were undoubtedly good and the West owes him a great debt for going to the aid of the peoples of Angola and Mozambique when everyone else seemed willing to let them have Communism forced upon them by Cubans, Russians, and East Germans. His intervention in Angola alone cost millions in taxpayer money and the lives of many of South Africa's conscript soldiers; it also led Botha to let inordinate power pass into the hands of the service and security chiefs. One of the first steps De Klerk took on assuming office was to take back that power and restore the rule of politicians. What has made this possible, indeed what has made possible the whole new direction that events have taken in South Africa, is the running-down of the Cold War as a result of the Gorbachev-Reagan accords. It was because the Soviets were believed to have called off the dogs in neighboring states that so many South African whites felt able to vote, as an election slogan put it, according to their hopes and not their fears.

If the independence process after the recent elections in Namibia goes well, that, too, is likely to make South Africans more confident about the democratization of their own electoral system. There is no reason to doubt Mr. Gorbachev's sincerity in speaking of peace in southern Africa. Civil war there would depress the price of gold, which would be as bad for the Soviet economy as for that of South Africa, and national liberation movements everywhere are a palpable menace to Russia's own stability. Unfortunately, modifications in the official Communist line cannot discipline the far left and the new left factions, who are as

active in Africa as they once were in Chile and Grenada. This is one reason why De Klerk took a calculated risk in releasing the African National Congress leaders from prison. He made their release "unconditional" and so allowed them to resume political activity, but he authorized the release first of subordinate figures Wilton Mkwayi, Elias Motsoaledi, Andrew Mlangeni, Raymond Mhlaba, Ahmed Kathrada, Oscar Mpheta, and Walter Sisulu, while delaying that of Nelson Mandela.

The almost mythical Mandela remains the unpredictable one. He was once a Communist, but who knows what he has become in his years of meditation since he was first imprisoned for terrorism in 1964. The Democratic party leader Denis Worrall suggested to me in conversation that if Mandela emerges from internment to plead for dialogue there is every likelihood of swift and peaceful change, but that if he comes out and calls for the "armed struggle" to continue, the impact will be disastrous. The ANC leaders already released have made gestures toward a negotiated settlement.

In the election, the National party campaigned under De Klerk on a platform that repudiated apartheid, leaving the Conservative party to collect the votes of those who wanted to keep it. What caused the Nationalists to abandon a policy that had once been a central part of their ideology? The Dutch Reformed Church, which has always had an enormous influence over Afrikaner thinking, must be given much credit for the change. Originally, its clergy claimed to find authority for apartheid in Scripture and in Calvin's teaching, but in forty years of prolonged debates and reflection they have come to condemn it. In any case, the conception of apartheid itself has changed. In its original form it was not necessarily unjust, for it proposed nothing less than the partition of South

Africa into two sovereign states, the blacks to have one, the whites another. The injustice emerged when this project proved impracticable simply because the whites could not do without the labor of blacks to maintain their mines and farms and factories and their comfortable domestic life-style. Modified apartheid turned out to be a policy of blacks and whites living under the same government with the whites having every privilege and the blacks no rights, the whites residing in the good areas and the blacks relegated to walled townships and forced to use separate and inferior schools, colleges, buses, trains, hospitals, beaches, libraries, pools, and all other public facilities.

The West owes Botha a great debt for going to the aid of the peoples of Angola and Mozambique when everyone else seemed willing to let them have Communism forced upon them.

Although the blacks have recently returned to live in "gray areas" in cities like Johannesburg, no less than three million were uprooted in forty years of apartheid resettlement.

If the clergy could defend apartheid in theory, they could not defend it in practice. Blacks even lost the economic freedom enjoyed by whites. They were forbidden to own property even in their homes, their industries were collectivized, their commerce regulated. Capitalism was for the whites, socialism for the blacks. The Afrikaner cult of the state produced a situation in the townships as wretched as that in Eastern Europe. The white trade unions reinforced this policy. Originally organized by Communists, the unions proved as racist as any Afrikaner nationalist, as they fought to prevent black workers from being given any job that a white worker wanted. More recently, trade unionism has been developed among blacks, so that unionized black workers in South Africa are today relatively better off and unionized white workers relatively worse off and among those voting for the Conservative party are undoubtedly a fair number of English-speaking blue-collar workers.

Altogether, the economy of South Africa today is unhealthy, despite all the riches of the country. Inflation is running at 11 percent and the banks are so short of liquidity that they offer 17 percent on time deposits. The currency, the rand, grows ever weaker on the foreign exchange market. Some of this is the result of sanctions, although their impact has yet to be thoroughly

researched. One thing that is clear is that they have hurt the non-unionized blacks most of all. This is especially noticeable in cases where, as a result of "disinvestment," former black employees of American companies have found themselves either unemployed or employed by less solicitous bosses. Kelloggs, for example, was a model employer, providing educational as well as medical and welfare services for its black workers, of a kind that no local employer could afford or perhaps would wish to afford. No doubt disinvestment has given American shareholders the comfortable feeling that their hands are unsoiled by apartheid. But its most obvious beneficiaries are

extension of sanctions, but she has received black journalists from South Africa and told them what she told De Klerk in person—that the South African government must mend its ways, abolish every vestige of apartheid, and introduce democracy.

Mrs. Thatcher stopped short of telling them how it might be done. That, she feels, must be decided by the people themselves. But this is the great dilemma that meets anyone who wants to introduce democracy: until you have democratic elections you cannot know who represents the people, and unless you have democratic institutions you cannot have democratic elections. The problem is all the more insoluble in a situation like that in South Africa today, where political organization of the blacks has been forbidden. Machiavelli said that if people who are unused to freedom are suddenly given freedom, they will jump into the arms of despots—which is exactly what happened in all those other countries in Africa that were once European colonies and then briskly decolonized. The lucky ones are those, such as the Ivory Coast and Malawi, which have benevolent and efficient despots; none can boast of liberty. De Klerk very sensibly does not wish to have one democratic election in South Africa that would be the last as well as the first.

He has said he is willing to meet representatives of blacks and other groups. But who is to rank as a representative? Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi is one obvious person, since he is prime minister of the kingdom of Zululand and leader of the Inkatha movement. He is a man of cosmopolitan culture, often seen on television in Western countries. He is also a moderate, and an eloquent opponent of sanctions. De Klerk clearly wishes that there were more black leaders like Buthelezi, but he is in fact unique. A spokesman of the Zulu race would not be accepted as a spokesman by the Sotho, Swazi, Xhosa, or other races into which the blacks of South Africa are ethnically divided or by the Indians and Coloreds. Indeed, Buthelezi is opposed by left-wing elements in his own kingdom, and shooting has already started in the hills of Natal. Church leaders in South Africa have emerged in the cities as political leaders, as they have in East Germany, but whatever their authority, they have not shown great political skill. It is clear that having released them from prison De Klerk will have to talk officially to the leaders of the African National Congress, including, sooner or later, Mandela, with whom De Klerk is already said to be negotiating secretly in his comfortable prison; in principle the ANC is still committed to violence,



but it might well be persuaded that non-violence is more effective.

The Democratic party has suggested that De Klerk should leave the choice of black and minority representatives to the chief justice, who should also organize talks to fix the agenda for further talks. What is clearly needed is a constitution that will introduce democracy without destroying freedom through the tyranny of the majority. The framers of the American Constitution were much exercised by this problem, and it has taxed the ingenuity of political scientists down through the ages. The Founding Fathers were afraid of the tyranny of ignorant men and perhaps also that of the landless poor who might vote down the rights of the propertied. The Afrikaners are afraid of the ideological passions of the masses that might allow a Marxist or some other such faction to secure the unreflective assent of a majority. The Afrikaners are deeply rooted in Africa. Since the original inhabitants, the Bushmen and the Hottentots, have long since faded away, the Afrikaners can claim to have been in South Africa longer than anyone else who is there now. They have cut off their links with Holland, and could not simply go back to a second home, as other whites might simply leave for England or Israel. The Afrikaners have been called

an African tribe, and it is clear they have a closer rapport with other African tribes, including the Coloreds, who share their Afrikaans language and their Calvinist religion, than do the reserved and standoffish English-speaking whites, who preserve the liberal imperialist tradition. Afrikaners and blacks seem to work well together on all sorts of local councils and consultative bodies, and to understand and respect each other as individuals however much they may be divided as tribes. There is no inseparable barrier, such as that of religion in Ireland and Sri Lanka, to hinder a negotiated settlement.

To visit South Africa is, in a curious way, to step back in time to the 1930s, to a world where maids still bustle about the house and gardeners tend old-fashioned gardens, where school children wear uniforms and learn Latin, where adults smoke more Camels and Chesterfields than are good for them, where automobiles have stick-shifts, where there is no rock music, but tangos and foxtrots, to be heard in tearooms, where no business is done on Sundays, and where nothing much but Noel Coward plays are to be seen in the theaters. The cultural boycott imposed by American and Euro-

pean trade unions at least preserves South Africa from the worst as well as the best in the contemporary art scene; and if liquor is cheap enough to be consumed as liberally as it was in the heyday of the British Empire, hard drugs are unknown, which is surely one reason why it is safer to walk in the gray areas of Cape Town or Johannesburg than in Los Angeles or New York.

In one country town in South Africa the local authorities have tried to turn back the clock in another sense: in Boksburg a Conservative party council restored segregation where it had been abolished in parks and pools and other public places. The black population thereupon took to non-violent protest and kept away from all the stores and shops owned by whites, with the result that many had to close down. Recently, taking advantage of what they have come to call De Klerk's "Pretoriastroika," several thousand blacks marched peacefully to the Town Hall. A white veteran of two World Wars, aged 76, named Hechter Schultz, greeted them with the words: "I am happy to see that my ideal of living alongside our black brothers as equal citizens is gradually reaching fruition." There was no police interference.

Elsewhere in South Africa apartheid is being whittled away in practice before it is abolished in law. There are,

for example, non-whites to be seen on all-white beaches on the Cape peninsula, and their presence seems to be in no way resented by the white bathers there, who are in any case the young and affluent, whereas the white racists tend to be the poor, the old, and the least educated. There is indeed a small group of out-and-out fascists, the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging, much photographed on foreign TV, which has a flag like a swastika and is led by Eugene TerreBlanche, a faintly ridiculous figure more like Mussolini than Hitler.

Racism is no longer smart or fashionable. The two main organs of the National party in the South African daily press, *Beeld* and *Die Burger*, have openly urged the release of Nelson Mandela, the ending of the state of emergency, the "unbanning" of the African National Congress, and the abolition of all apartheid laws, which the new minister of law and order, Adriaan Volk, has described as an "albatross" around the neck of Afrikaner nationalism. Curiously enough, these demands are identical with those made in a petition of the protest marchers who took to the streets of Johannesburg and Cape Town in September. In both cases what was asked for was not so much democracy tomorrow as liberty today. □

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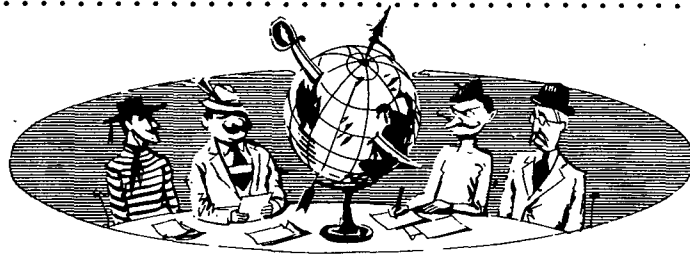
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EUROPEAN DOCUMENT



NO MORE HUNGARIAN COMRADES

by Mark Lilla

Budapest

The "refolution"¹ began festively enough. The subways were dangerously packed, and it took several long, rather frightening minutes to make our way from the platform to the escalator and out into the Indian-summer sun illuminating Kossuth Square. There were, by all accounts, already 150,000 people there. Banners were being unfolded, young men were selling commemorative literature and lapel buttons, and the Hungarian flag—red, white, and green—was being waved assertively throughout the crowd. Then the chants began: "No more Communism!" "Russians go home!" We wondered how many of those around us understood the gravity of what was about to take place.

But when Matyas Szuros, acting head of state, emerged from the balcony of Hungary's neo-gothic parliament the crowd fell silent. It is a history drenched balcony, the spot where Imre Nagy made his ill-starred attempt to calm the 1956 uprising, and the place where, the next day, horrified members of parliament watched hundreds of innocents butchered in the crossfire between Russian troops who had joined the revolt and their Hungarian Stalinist adversaries. The romantic national anthem rises over loudspeakers and the crowd begins to sing along, hopelessly out of tune. Szuros then recites a modest speech declaring the end of the People's Republic of Hungary and the founding of the new (i.e., Third) Republic of Hungary. Deafening cheers ricochet off the facades of the square. He then makes the mistake of calling for continued cooperation with the Soviet Union and is engulfed by hoots and whistles. But his balance is finally restored when he calls for closer ties with the U.S., and the crowd lets one last moderate hurrah escape before filing out calmly to the other ceremonies

already under way across Budapest.

For this was just the beginning of what proved to be a very long day devoted to commemorating the uprising of October 23, 1956. But it was also the end of a two-week long whirlwind that had left every Hungarian I met gasping for breath. While lecturing in Poland the week before, I had learned of the Communists' hari-kari, their decision to renounce the tenets of Marxism-Leninism and to rename themselves the Hungarian Socialist party. "And this was sufficient," the prayer goes; and, indeed, in Poland it was treated as an important achievement.

But on arriving in Budapest I learned that no one here found this nearly sufficient, and that much more significant and durable changes were being demanded. During the previous weeks a number of opposition groups had refused to sign an agreement with the Communists and had drawn up a petition asking for further concessions from the government. At the beginning of the week it was reported that the

petitioners had more than 100,000 signatures, enough to force a referendum and throw into doubt the so-called triangle talks with the then governing party.

I was surprised to discover this split within the opposition and the new demands, chiefly because Western reporters have treated recent Hungarian events exclusively as a "revolution from within" led by the reform Communist Imre Pozsgay. In fact, the day I arrived Pozsgay's butterball smile was seen all over Budapest newsstands, thanks to *Newsweek*, which also published an Andropov-style portrait of his recent achievements.

Yet Pozsgay is a very equivocal figure here, and no one really trusts him. One reason is that the largest opposition group, the Democratic Forum, is really his brainchild; he was present at its founding convention and even offered a close aide as its president. As an organization the Forum is very new, its supporters are found mainly in the smaller towns and countryside, and its rhetoric borders on the mildly nationalistic. It lacks, as one friend put it, any moral claim to the legacy of '56, which perhaps explains its willingness to sign a quick accord with the Communists.

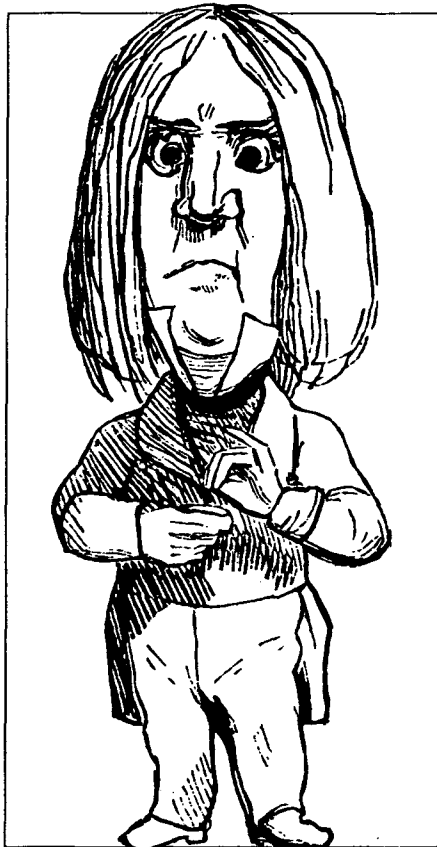
Separating themselves somewhat from the Forum are a number of smaller groups, led by the Alliance of Free Democrats. The Free Democrats, although recently formed as well, represent the real opposition tradition in Hungary, and are made up of long-suffering urban intellectuals who have been trying to publish and organize ever since the uprising thirty-three years ago. They are "cosmopolitan" (that is, more Jewish, less nationalistic) and distrust deeply Pozsgay and his marionettes.

The Free Democrats and their partners split with the Democratic Forum over several points, including the dissolution of the hated paramilitary workers' militia, the redistribution of Communist party property, and the banning of all party organizations

from the workplace. But the main sticking point between the two groups seemed to be Pozsgay himself. The Forum agreed with the Communists to run presidential elections before the parliamentary ones, thus favoring the currently popular Pozsgay and giving both sides a president they can live with. Let Pozsgay be Jaruzelski, they said. The Free Democrats, who lack a strong candidate, want to do all they can to stop this Mephistopheles, and some are even willing to support the peasant parties who plan to nominate the Austrian pretender Otto von Hapsburg, currently a member of the European Parliament. Let Otto be Otto, they say, before we accept Pozsgay.

By mid-week the Free Democrats' petition had 200,000 signatures and parliament was forced to move preemptively. It acted on several of their demands, dissolving the workers' militia and barring political parties from the shop floor, but still left open the question of presidential elections. Now, as I write a week later, I learn that parliament has capitulated on this final point as well, and that a referendum will soon be held on the order of the new presidential and parliamentary elections. The "radicals," as the Western press insists on calling them, seem to have defeated the "moderates," and the Hungarians will be able to choose the form of their transition to democracy.

Several weeks ago this was unthinkable, and even one week ago the battle seemed only half won. Then, on Wednesday night, just as everyone was getting accustomed to the earliest government concessions, we received totally unexpected news: parliament had voted constitutional amendments to eliminate all references to the Communist party and was to declare a new Hungarian republic the following Monday, the anniversary of the 1956 uprising. The assembly stopped short of making October 23 a national holiday, preferring instead to call it a "day of national reconciliation." No matter: the republic was now to be a reality, and all across the countryside cranes were



¹The term is Timothy Garton Ash's, for the combination of reform and revolution taking place in Eastern Europe.

Mark Lilla, a former editor of the *Public Interest*, lives in Paris.

dismantling the rusting red stars that stood on most government buildings.

It was, then, with a certain sense of numb disbelief that Hungarians made the tour of the commemorations, which may explain the moderate calm that ruled the city on this historic day. Exactly one year ago the police had used truncheons to disperse the crowds hoping to celebrate the uprising's anniversary, and now there was not a uniform to be seen. (The laughably obvious undercover agents were everywhere, of course, in their unmistakable Naugahyde jackets and factory-faded jeans.) There were video cameras throughout the crowd, but they were in private hands this time, those of young parents hoping to preserve these moments for their children. The well-orchestrated reburial of Imre Nagy last spring had already set a precedent for such sanctioned demonstrations, but there was nonetheless an unreal air about marching freely, *en masse*, down Budapest's wide—and now republican—avenues.

There was, to begin, a commemorative celebration on the Buda side of the Danube at the statue of Joseph Bem, the Polish hero of the 1848 Hungarian revolution. It was here that the 1956 uprising first took form, as tens of thousands of students gathered to read out their demands to the Communist government. There was another ceremony outside the offices of the Hungarian radio station, where the students had later marched to have their demands broadcast—and where they were cut down by security guards in the narrow streets below. A third was held at Heroes' Square (*née* Stalin Square), where the '56 demonstrators had taken tractor, truck, and blowtorch to the 25-foot statue of the Great Liberator, finally breaking Uncle Joe at the knees. A fourth took place in Corvin Alley, outside a theater and troop garrison where some of the worst hand-to-hand combat had taken place. And finally, that evening, there was another solemn memorial service in front of parliament in Kossuth Square.

This last ceremony was the most moving, perhaps because it was held at night. The parliament facade was flooded with klieg lights for the television cameras, and the crowd held high the lit candles it had been asked to bring. The anti-Communist and anti-Soviet slogans were taken up again, and a few demonstrators paraded with large cardboard arrows reading "Moscow, 1,535 Km. Bon Voyage." But in the main the ceremony was fittingly somber. The speakers were all resistance fighters who had been condemned to death in 1956 but had managed to survive—some by going

abroad, others by spending years on death row, awaiting their call. The national anthem was struck up now and again, sometimes with recorded music, sometimes spontaneously. And after two hours of speeches and singing, the lights were finally turned off, plunging the square once again into darkness. Only a single spotlight remained, focused on that famous balcony where someone had thoughtfully hung an

oversized portrait of this day's improbable Communist hero, Imre Nagy.

So why, I wondered as I followed the crowd out on that unseasonably warm October night, has this whole experience left me so uneasy? We've won—or at least we're winning. I have just seen hundreds of thousands celebrating the suicide of a Communist

regime, the end of a mercifully bloodless "revolution." I have just come from Poland, where my friends are emerging from the samizdat shadows to run government press conferences or found newspapers. As this article goes to press, the Wall has opened in East Germany, and there are stirrings in Czechoslovakia and even Bulgaria. Indeed, the very existence of the Warsaw Pact is being thrown into question.

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Whatever Gorbachev's fate, I am told here, something irreversible has happened. We have seen the triumph of an idea that no one, not even Rumania's Ceausescu, can resist forever. It is 1848 all over again.

Perhaps it is this parallel with 1848 that underlies my discomfort. For there is a great deal to the comparison, and it is being made everywhere on the con-

tinental today. It certainly fits nicely into the Euro-kitsch rhetoric of "1992," which seems to be arriving a few years earlier than planned and with a number of uninvited guests. But 1848 also fanned the flames of a modern passion—nationalism—which undid republicanism in Central Europe at the time, and could very well do it again. Make no mistake about it: the revolutions of

1989 are as nationalistic as they are liberal, and it is difficult to know which impulse will finally out.

"Nationalism" is a loaded word, I know. It can wash away a thousand sins, as when Third World tyrants are called "nationalist leaders" rather than thugs. It can also sanction indifference, as it often has in Western policy toward Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe, which at one time was deemed too unstable to merit freedom, because of its "extreme nationalism." Considered simply as national spirit within a single country, nationalism can either serve freedom or snuff it, depending on the form that spirit takes. But when an entire region discovers that spirit simultaneously, as seems to be happening in Central and Eastern Europe today, the character of each country's revived national spirit will depend heavily on its neighbors': one troublemaker, and there goes the neighborhood.

The Poles seem most conscious of this problem and of its importance in their future. They know that Polish nationalism has given them hope and strength over centuries of Russian, German, and Austrian occupation; they also know that under that same foreign pressure it drove them to crimes, particularly against the Jews and Ukrainians. A free republic without these two faces of nationalism would be something new under the Polish sun—and would in fact be difficult to maintain in the face of the *sotto voce* German revanchism now rising on the west and the newly unleashed Ukrainian national movement on the east.

This theme was sounded again and again in private conversations and in the official celebrations. Every time the Hungarian national anthem was sung during last week's ceremonies, for instance, it was immediately followed by an anthem for Transylvania. Each of those ceremonies also included a message to Hungarians "still living under foreign domination," a reminder that their brothers in the homeland had not forgotten them, and that Hungary would not really be free until all Hungarians are free. Understandable as these declarations are, one can only wonder how the Rumanians, Slovaks, and Croats interpret them.

I am told that when Imre Nagy made his 1956 balcony speech he began, instinctively enough, "Comrades!" Someone in the square below shot back, "There are no more comrades! We are all Hungarians!" It can finally be said that there are no comrades left in Hungary today, and hardly anywhere else in this region. But neither is there a liberal democratic tradition to be revived here, a set of political habits and customs that can be counted on to support the moderate toleration demanded by republican life. This is not to say that peaceful republican life is unimaginable here, but it must be admitted frankly that for the whole region to be simultaneously free and at peace would be unprecedented. When one visits each country one sees democratic forms springing up, for the will to nourish them is strong. If "we are all Hungarians!" meant that the Hungarians could determine their own fate I am sure they could be counted on to build a free, democratic republic. But they are not alone. The question is: Can the Hungarians count on the Slovaks and Croats? And can they count on the Poles and the Serbs? And can they in turn count on the Rumanians and Ukrainians, not to mention the Albanians and Lithuanians. . . ?

My Hungarian friends think I worry too much, and perhaps I do. It is not every day that one witnesses 150,000 people shouting down Communism and cheering every mention of the United States. A free republic has just been born: shouldn't that be enough? I smile and tell myself it is, and try to enjoy the party. I'm careful not to talk about history. I don't mention the unintended consequences that seem to follow upon the dissolution of empires; I try not to think about the dark side of 1848. The hot October sun is beating down on a Hungary that soon expects to see itself free, affluent, at peace, and part of something called "Europe." Fine: welcome to the Free World. And God-speed. □

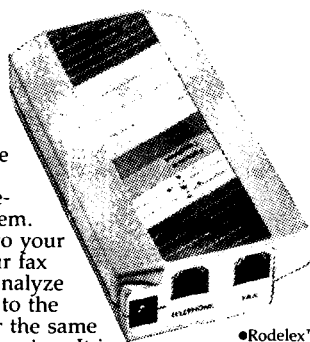
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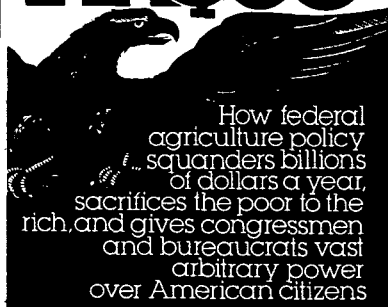
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The Hungarian case is different, both historically and today. Individual Hungarians one meets are quick to boast that they are not like the Poles, that Budapest has the largest Jewish community in Central Europe, that everyone belongs to the Wallenberg committee, and that the gypsy problem is now under compassionate study. But the real problem with Hungarian nationalism is not internal; it is external, geographic. As those very same Hungarians are also quick to remind us, there are still two or three million ethnic Hungarians living across the borders in Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Slovakia. In conversation it will be dropped, quite casually, that Hungary is a mutilated country which lost two-thirds of its original territory in the unjust Trianon Treaty of 1920. The borders are not in question, they then reassure us, especially since the original borders of the Empire included other Slavic peoples. Still, something must be done for their oppressed Hungarian brothers in Slovakia, Croatia, and especially in Ceausescu-controlled Transylvania.

EMINENTOES



BABY DOC

by Joe Queenan

I discovered Dr. Benjamin Spock too late in my childhood for him to be much use against my parents. Spock's books, setting forth cogent scientific reasons why you should not whip on your kids with two-by-fours or car aerials never achieved much market penetration in the forlorn North Philadelphia housing project where I grew up; the first time I ever heard of the old coot he was getting hauled off to the pokey as a result of some civilly disobedient action, while sensible onlookers scratched their heads and said, "What's a nice old baby doctor like that getting mixed up in this political stuff for?" Well, here it is, twenty years later and he's still getting hauled off to the pokey while sensible folks scratch their heads. Meanwhile, back in the housing projects, people are still whipping on their kids with car aerials.

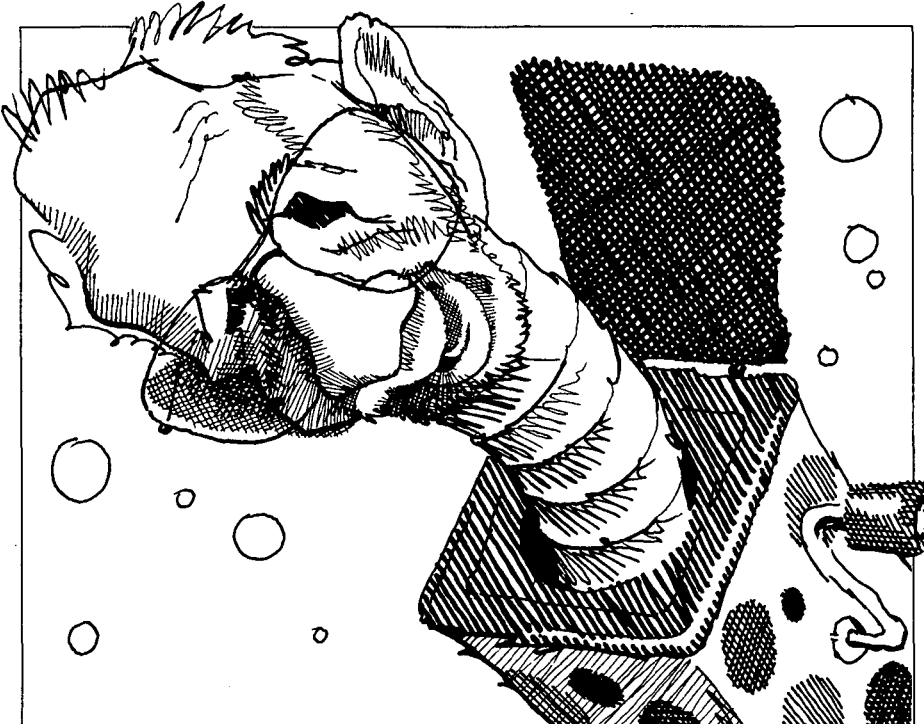
By the time I discovered Benjamin Spock in the middle 1960s, he was already a figure of mirth. People on the right thought he was a jerk for taking public stands against nuclear arms, the war in Vietnam, and segregation, partly because they thought he was wrong but also because they thought baby doctors should mind their own business. But people on the left, particularly hip young college kids like me, also felt embarrassed by his presence because he looked like a baby doctor: a big goofy mushmouth wearing a pair of oversized Clark Kent glasses.

Spock, who is now eighty-six, has been a gawky old fussbudget for so long that few Americans alive today can recall when he wasn't a publicity-hogging old gasbag. But back in the psychedelic days of yore he *really* stood out with those Brooks Brothers overcoats and that king-sized beak. I used to think that Allen Ginsberg bribed Spock to join the New Left because otherwise *he* would have been the goofiest-looking guy in the movement. No, Spock simply didn't have the duds

or the attitude to be a hard-line leftist; he kicked out few jams; rare was the pig who feared being offed by him.

All that said, it would be unfair to overlook the immense contributions Spock has made to American society. In fact, Spock will be remembered by future generations for two very different reasons: because he wrote a very influential book about raising babies without turning them into sociopaths or neurotics, and because his clownish antics paved the way for Ronald Reagan's presidency. Spock's philosophy doesn't seem hard to swallow now, but for a while there people thought the guy was on Mars. Early to bed, go easy on the sweets, and don't turn the toilet into an electric chair were his basic tenets, and that was pretty scary stuff for folks who believe in Jacobin pediatrics: that a child without lesions is a child without love.

Spock is also to be congratulated for his firm stand against teaching children to read before the age of seven. Long before the age of superkids, Spock warned that if you teach kids to read at age three they'll grow up maladjusted—particularly if they waste the four years' headstart on a subscription to *Vanity Fair*.



Spock was important for one final reason: because he was true to his class. Those of us who did not go to Andover and Yale, as Spock did, always imagine that the lads get together at age thirteen and divvy up society: "You fellows in the corner, Treasury; Averell and Biff, State; Harry, Robert, and Guy, IMF. And Ben and William Sloane over there, you chaps get arrested climbing over barbed-wire fences at nuclear power plants." Then the boys gather in the Vineyard every summer, compare notes, and go boating. It's so . . . traditional, so . . . decent.

Yes, Benjamin Spock is a towering example of that distinctly American phenomenon: the preppy beat-off who goes around making a fool of himself, offering opinions that are not sought, wielding a moral authority he does not possess, clasping arms with titans dozens of times his stature (Jack Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Charlie Chaplin), and, of course, getting hauled off to the clink. This is where pedigree pays off: if you can flash that Andover or Yale I.D. you usually don't have to worry about getting gang-raped or pistol-whipped down in the holding tank. Show up with a degree from Jackson State and you're on your own.

These thoughts are occasioned by the publication of *Spock on Spock*,¹ a vapid autobiography co-written with Spock's current wife, Mary Morgan, who is about forty years his junior. Morgan, who writes for *Redbook* and *Parade*, has organized this overly cutesy affair by letting the Spocker ramble as the tape recorder runs. But Rosemary Woods must have busted into the room at some point, because we never do find out why this seeker of truth, this dreamer of dreams, this doctor of babies ditched his wife of fifty years for a woman forty years his junior. No, wait a minute there—86? 50? 40?—maybe we do.

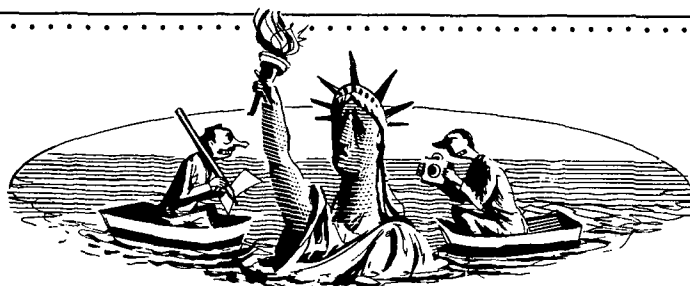
Morgan says that she wanted to get this book out because she feared that her hubby's "courageous political life would be overshadowed by his more benign pediatric career." Sorry, Mary, but this ain't Socrates or Oliver Cromwell we're talking about here. Unlike Bertrand Russell or Jean-Paul Sartre, left-wing titans who could still bring the fastball in their waning years, Dr. Spock is betrayed in this book as precisely what he always was: an affable old geezer with a third-rate intellect. (Morgan's third-rate intellect makes a nice fit.) The book is as banal and uninspiring as the family photos that accompany it. Read it to the kids if you want them to nod off early.

Yes, it's a dull book, but it sure was a fun life. And it is the life, particularly the last third, that will abide as Spock's finest gift to the society he clearly loves. For Spock's message is clear: Don't ever be afraid to make a fool of yourself. Don't ever be afraid to run as a socialist candidate for the White House. Don't ever be afraid to shake hands with Daniel Ortega. Don't ever be afraid to get your 86-year-old body snared in barbed wire at a nuclear power plant. Most of all, don't ever be afraid to leave your wife of fifty years for a woman forty years younger. Just make sure the photographers are near. They love baby doctor pictures. □

¹Pantheon, \$19.95.

Joe Queenan is a senior editor for Forbes.

PRESSWATCH



SEALED WITH A KISS

by Terry Eastland

Okay, so I spoke too soon. Two months ago I wrote that George Bush's presidency had not been plagued by leaks to the same degree as Ronald Reagan's—especially leaks of the personal kind that seek to do in a high-ranking aide. The November *TAS* had just begun to circulate when a quite major leak, indeed one of those anti-aide kind, could be observed in the Bush presidency. It was followed a couple weeks later by a second big leak. Both times President Bush went into his “leaks thing,” by which I mean he went ballistic. Bush hates leaks more than any President since Richard Nixon. It's not that he's paranoid about the media. He simply sees leaking as violating the terms of employment (perhaps also the concept of the “unitary executive,” as a constitutional law scholar might put it).

Clearly, then, it is time for another round of leakology. I'll focus more on the first leak than the second, but only because space is short.

The second leak produced a premature announcement of official news, in this case the “saltwater summit.” There it was, the lead of the *Washington Post* on October 31, put there by an unnamed source. The U.S. and the Soviet Union had coordinated their watches and were scheduled to announce the summit on the very day the story appeared. Coming on the eve of the scheduled announcement, this leak especially irked Bush. Secretary of State James Baker wound up calling his Soviet counterpart, Eduard Shevardnadze, to tell him the story was out. (That would have been something to hear.) As it turned out, the Soviets, perhaps because they need the summit more than we do, said the leak caused “no problems,” according to a spokesman in Washington. Nonetheless, Bush ordered all media calls to the

White House routed through the press office. That assumes the leak came from the White House, but it should be noted that by five o'clock the day before the *Post* story, word of the summit, known only to Bush, Baker, Sununu, and perhaps a few horseshoes, was sent to assistant secretaries at the State and Defense Departments. That proves nothing, of course. Whatever the case, the Bush order on media calls evidently did slow down conversations between reporters and White House officials for a day or two.

Now to the first leak, a striking one indeed.

On Monday, October 16, the *Washington Post* published a front-page story by Ann Devroy and David B. Ottaway headlined: “CIA Director Under Fire: Bush Aides See Webster as Ineffective.” Red Grange, the famous halfback of a half century ago, once said he could see the run happening as he ran. With my own eyes, I could see this leak happening as I read. Not a single one of the Bush aides going after CIA Director William H. Webster was on the record.

“Senior officials in the Bush administration,” went the lead, “are expressing increasing frustration with the performance of CIA Director William H. Webster and have begun to talk about possibly replacing him with someone

who can play a more active role as an intelligence adviser to the president.”

That was a hard, confident lead, softened only by the adverb “possibly.” The next paragraph said that Chief of Staff John Sununu had quipped at a recent staff meeting that “he had learned more about the attempted coup in Panama from watching Cable News Network than from Webster's Central Intelligence Agency.” No sourcing of any kind on this, but don't think it was Sununu, who isn't the sort to talk against his colleagues “on background.” (Recall that Sununu's remarks about statements made by drug czar William Bennett at the September education summit were on the record.)

The next paragraph had someone saying that the White House “is playing without a full deck of advisers.” Said who? Said “another official critical of Webster.”

The next paragraph was explanatory. Webster's mission in going from the FBI to the CIA in 1987, in the wake of disclosures regarding the Iran-contra affair, was to “play down the director's role, especially in policy discussions, and emphasize good relations with Congress.” Alas for Webster, this approach, said the story, “appears not to suit many in the new administration.” How many, not to mention just who in the new administration, was left unsaid.

The story continued: A “knowledgeable source” said Webster was considered “‘too captive of Congress,’ too lax in day-to-day management of intelligence and lacking a broad strategic overview of foreign policy and the intelligence community's role.”

A “senior official” was quoted at length. The CIA, he (or she) said, is “not being very energetically or effectively led. . . . There is unhappiness with the intelligence being provided . . . and with the conclusions based on that intelligence.” Webster is “not close to Bush” or Secretary of State James Baker. Or national security adviser Brent Scowcroft. Hmmm. Did Bush

leak? Perish the thought. Baker? Scowcroft? Possible. Their aides? Doing it discreetly? More likely. But who knows?

The *Post* had a hard time nailing down when Webster might leave or be asked to leave. The authors of the story noted, as though in an aside to the reader, that no one interviewed for the article “indicated that Webster's departure from the CIA is imminent.” Doubtless that was comforting to Webster.

The *Post* quoted a “senior official” as saying: “If you guys start writing Bush is unhappy with him, the president will kiss both his cheeks in the Rose Garden and keep him for seven more years.” Of course, the *Post* had not written that Bush was unhappy with Webster. Not exactly. But like the smell that suggests what's in the oven when the contents can't be seen, the story indicated as much.

On the other hand, it could be argued that whoever made the colorful “kiss-both-cheeks” remark had precisely the motive of getting Bush to “keep [Webster] for several more years.” Doubtful, I know, but we're dealing with sources we don't know who probably include intelligence people, trained in counter-intelligence—and maybe skilled at counter-leaking?

I asked the *Post*'s Ann Devroy, who shared the byline, what the motives of this particular unsourced individual were. She declined to say, of course, just as she declined to reveal who this source was (or who the other sources were, for that matter). I didn't expect she would. But as they say in the news business, it never hurts to ask.

The *Post* queried a CIA spokesman, who for the record said that Webster had seen Bush several times in the past week. Webster, presumably through the spokesman, had no comment on criticisms “made by these administration officials,” who, the *Post* pointed out, “all declined to be identified by name or position” and who “include high-ranking officials.” Just how high? Only the *Post* knows for sure.

The story went on to elaborate Web-



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ster's problems, running thirty-five column inches and jumping twice, from A-1 to A-6 to A-7, acquiring new headlines at each stage, as though to alert the sleepy reader who'd forgotten his A-1 while eating his Cheerios. Thus, A-6: "Bush Aides Criticize CIA Chief" and A-7: "Agency Seen as Lacking Energy, Direction Under Webster." Here was a major story, or so it seemed.

White House reporters I talked to were underwhelmed by it. One reason is that the kind of complaints made about Webster in the *Post* story are old-hat. The intelligence community in particular had groused about Webster during the transition. Reporters knew this and some reported it. As one White House reporter told me, his newspaper "had already gone the distance on that."

A second reason is that some reporters thought it unfair to report a story critical of Webster for failing to meet expectations different from those Bush originally had. After all, the President himself said the CIA director should not be in the cabinet; that is, he should be more bureaucrat than adviser.

A third reason was the negative flavor of the story. Knight-Ridder's Owen Ullman says, "Nothing is easier to do than find someone, even a responsible figure, willing to trash someone else in the administration on background." Ullman declined to write the story.

Reporters who cover the White House are one thing, the souls who occupy the White House quite another. What was underwhelming to some White House reporters was overwhelming to George Bush. Bush sent out his press secretary, Marlin Fitzwater, to advise the press corps that the *Post* story was "outrageous" and to affirm that Bush "has complete confidence in Director Webster and the leadership he is providing at the CIA." (I am quoting now from the *Post*'s story of October 17.) The administration's response was a coordinated effort: in separate interviews with the *Post*, Webster and his two top aides defended the CIA's record under its new director. Scowcroft also put out a written statement saying "rumors of White House displeasure [with Webster] are totally false."

What to make of all of this? First of all, no one has told the whole story. And second, no one really can. The *Post*'s original Webster story was entirely dependent on unnamed "high-ranking" sources. Very likely, they include people both in the intelligence community and in the White House. Once the story broke, however, all statements from the administration in response to

it were "on the record." It's quite possible that, excepting Bush and Webster, those "on the record" in response to the original story were unnamed sources for that story. But the *Post* did not inform its readers of that possibility, much less the truth of the matter.

The reason, as I explained in my September column, is that the source-reporter relationship lies at the heart of modern journalism. Reporters regard it as sacred. They protect it as surely as they do their lives. Their view is understandable. To reveal the identity of a confidential source is to break a promise. That is the moral reason, and it is usually the one given.

But there are practical reasons as well. To reveal a confidential source is also to dry it up, perhaps even to draw a nasty lawsuit (a Minnesota court recently ruled against a newspaper that identified such a source). Revealing a source also works against a reporter's desire to cultivate new sources. And sources—especially unnamed ones—are what give a reporter, and the institution he works for, power (not to mention prestige). Confidential sources enable a reporter, once in print or on the air, to become a public repository of what is known only privately by those involved in the story he covered (assuming, of course, that the sources are telling the truth).

The benefits are mixed. What otherwise might not be known but should be known, by any estimation of the public interest, is brought to light. On the other hand, on many occasions, as with the Webster story, a reader cannot know the whole story, which involves who, precisely, is leaking, and why. The *Post*, in covering the administration response to its story, regurgitated some contents of that story, repeating the "kiss-both-cheeks" quote. It would have been interesting to know what that unnamed official thought of Bush's reaction—he would have had to comment on background, of course. But the *Post* did not tell us. And maybe this official was, this time, on the record. The reader is left in the dark, just as the day before he wasn't told what the motive of this unidentified source was.

Furthermore, the reader is left wondering how come Scowcroft and others did not speak in behalf of Webster, and *on the record*, in time to make the first story. After all, only the most naive can fail to see a story like that coming; surely higher-ups knew it was in the works. The best response—that is, one designed to help the individual under attack—is to get into the breaking story, *on the record*. The *Post* did not tell us why the White House was officially speechless. Given the sourcing, it

probably could not have. And here's a postscript: I asked a CIA spokesman about the administration's absence from the original story. "I can't talk about that on the record," was the reply. (For the record, he couldn't talk about that on background either.)

Ah, the mysteries of the leak! Bush acted true to his anti-leak form, in sending Fitzwater out to blast the story and support Webster. Webster himself acted true to his own form, which places high priority on how he is regarded by establishment Washington,

by not only sitting for an interview the day the story broke but also coming back to the *Post* several weeks later for a lengthy interview to show the world (i.e., the Washington world) that he is fully in charge.

The net of all of this is that, notwithstanding the concerns within the administration about Webster, concerns that are undeniable, his directorship of the CIA has probably been given a longer lease on life. Bush has indeed kissed the man on both cheeks. □



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THE PUBLIC POLICY



THE MASSACHUSETTS DEBACLE

by Joe Mysak

Salesmen at one brokerage house last year were exhorted over the company's public address system, "This may be your last chance to sell Massachusetts bonds with a double-A-plus rating!" An analyst who was there recalls, "When I heard it, I didn't think it was because they were going to be upgraded to triple-A anytime soon."

And so it has proved to any investor who bought the commonwealth's bonds because of their solid reputation with analysts, especially at the rating agencies, before 1989. Massachusetts, at least as far as bond buyers go, might turn out to be the Louisiana of the 1990s.

Louisiana, rated at Baa-1 by Moody's Investor Service and triple-B-plus by Standard and Poor's Corporation, is the lowest-rated state bond issuer, the victim of bad politics and worse crude oil prices. And since May 1988, Massachusetts has sunk with startling alacrity in the eyes of analytical beholders. With a budget deficit amounting to more than \$700 million, it may soon have the lowest-rated honor all to itself. Beset by a deficit resulting from dreamy tax revenue calculations, fiscal mismanagement, and political paralysis, the commonwealth is now rated just a cut above the Pelican State.

But that may change very soon, as the commonwealth grapples with its deficit. In late November, Moody's cut Massachusetts to Baa-1 while Standard and Poor's put it on its CreditWatch list with "negative implications," threatening to cut its A-rating to triple-B, the basement.

And as the state goes, so go many of its localities, dependent as many of them are on state aid. "Sure, I expect us to be downgraded," said the mayor of one small Massachusetts city. "Just under 40 percent of our budget comes from the state." Such was one effect of Proposition 2½, passed in 1980 to rein in property taxes. And the state is now cutting aid.

Joe Mysak, The American Spectator's chief saloon correspondent, is the managing editor of the daily Bond Buyer.

Downgradings are more than a blow to prestige. In the three-handed compact drawn between issuer, rating agency, and investor, lower ratings translate into the higher yields that those who sell bonds must offer to those who buy them. As my local official friend observed, "It will cost us about a quarter-point more to borrow."

But the amazing thing about the downgradings that occurred in 1989, and those that are undoubtedly still to come, is not that they are taking place at all but how long it took for them to be made. It is only a historical footnote to the election of 1988, but an important one for those who care about Wall Street's political leanings, and about how keeping mum can have dire effects.

First, a bit of history. In January 1988, Gov. Michael Dukakis signed legislation authorizing "a comprehensive reform and funding plan" designed to eliminate the commonwealth's \$10 billion unfunded pension liability. "This clears up the last dark cloud on the fiscal horizon," said Frank Keefe, then the commonwealth's secretary of administration and finance. That was followed by Moody's and Standard and Poor's raising their ratings on the state's debt to Aa and double-A-plus, respectively. It seemed a reasonable move.

The dark clouds quickly returned, and Governor Dukakis apparently ran out of the magic his predecessors had used in creating the Massachusetts miracle. During the summer, the state estimated it had a \$450 million shortfall, and the candidate scrambled to get his own house in order even as he was on the campaign warpath.

At the root of the deficit in Massachusetts, as earlier in New York and California, were taxpayer responses to changes in federal tax laws. By mid-summer, the commonwealth had been to the short-term debt market four times, selling notes to ride out budgetary troubles, and even descended to writing "hot checks" to cover itself. There seemed to be something more at

work here than a simple overestimation of tax revenues: New York and California both had managed fairly robust comebacks by now. And unfortunately for the Duke, local pols started complaining that state spending, and tax increases, were at fault.

By October, the deficit was estimated at a chronic and apparently ineradicable \$450 million and climbing. Nonetheless, the agencies reaffirmed their ratings, and one of their analysts told the *New York Times* that he felt "the debt load is quite manageable."

Shortly before the election, I dined with a few top dogs at one of the agencies. Asked whether politics could have anything to do with the agencies' inexplicable silence, they denied it absolutely.

The rating, needless to say, remained intact. The Duke went down in flames. The commonwealth's deficit continued to grow, as did voter and legislator dissatisfaction. The agencies, beginning in May 1989, finally reacted and, in an unprecedented and unseemly frenzy to make up for their past dilatory behavior, cut the commonwealth's debt—including bonds, notes, and commercial paper—no fewer than seven times.

Not everyone, however, was willing to let them off the hook so quickly. Editorialist John Fund of the *Wall Street Journal*, who had tormented Dukakis throughout the presidential campaign with a series of editorials on the commonwealth featuring a logo of the state surrounded by dancing question marks, turned out an editorial at the end of August entitled, "The Last to Know." The gist of it was that the rating agencies had been playing politics.

He reasoned that the agencies did not respond to the commonwealth's red ink because their analysts were liberals who favor big-spending governments, and Mike Dukakis was their man. No matter how badly Massachusetts fared during the election year, they were not about to hurt Michael's

chances by downgrading his state.

In response to the editorial, the bond community, and in particular the community of municipal analysts, with few exceptions, closed ranks. Several leading analysts offered criticism in their firms' municipal-market newsletters, one going so far as to refer to the *Journal's* editorial as "claptrap." Journalists, of course, know nothing of the entrail-reading analytical process; we only judge from the evidence at hand.

To imagine a full-fledged conspiracy of silence does require a certain leap of faith. But there is a certain amount of evidence for it. "Let's face it: analysts come to the table with a certain amount of, ahh, baggage," an official at one of the agencies told me.

One portfolio manager got a look at this baggage first-hand, meeting with an agency analyst at an industry function. "She sat down to lunch, and immediately declared that the last good mayor of New York City was John Lindsay. I took up the challenge: 'Yes,' I said, 'if your criterion for greatness is being able to run the city into the ground.'"

If politics was not at work, one might place credence in the tale of an agency official, full of a certain perniciousness and arrogance, who told one of my sources in early 1988, "We can't downgrade Massachusetts. We just upgraded them a few months ago."

Yet another possibility presents itself. Gov. Buddy Roemer of Louisiana explained the situation: "A good reputation will take you a long way," he said. The question remains, however, as to just how far it should take you.

Dukakis never made it to the safety of the other side of the Potomac and now faces another long year as a lame duck. "There are a lot of feelings of anger and betrayal that one, he lost, and two, that in the process of running he covered up a fiscal situation that could have been manageable 15 months ago and has now spiralled into a crisis," Marjorie P. Clapgood, a Democratic state representative, told the *New York Times* about the Massachusetts mess.

In November, the state revenue advisory board estimated the state's budget deficit at \$700 million. It has climbed steadily, as Dukakis and his few remaining loyalists put forth package after package of spending

cuts, tax increases, and revenue raisers (including one measure designed to pull in uncollected bottle deposits), and the commonwealth's legislature bats them down.

The next battle for Massachusetts

will take place on the tax front, with the sides lining up predictably. The left is clamoring for tax increases rather than "human sacrifices," in the words of *Globe* columnist Bob Kuttner, while everyone else contends that taxes have

already been raised enough, and that instead tax credits should be used to encourage investment.

Either way, it will be a long time before we see Massachusetts at double-A-plus again. □

THE TALKIES



DOPES ON DOPE

by Bruce Bawer

Finally, a movie whose characters we can all identify with. Twenty-six-year-old Bob Hughes (Matt Dillon), the eponymous hero of *Drugstore Cowboy*, is a full-time dope fiend. So are his wife, Dianne (Kelly Lynch), his sidekick, Rick (James Le Gross), and Rick's girlfriend, Nadine (Heather Graham). It's 1971, and these four adorable kids live together in Portland, Oregon, where—since none of them holds down a job—they spend their days jabbing hypodermic needles into their arms and ripping off local pharmacies. A scene early in the movie illustrates their *modus operandi*: Nadine distracts the druggist and his customers by faking an epileptic seizure near the doorway; meanwhile, Bob slips nimbly behind the prescription counter and empties a drawer full of controlled substances; Dianne helps keep attention away from the counter, and on the way out steals a paperback copy of *Love Story* from a rack (she's the literary one); and Rick drives the getaway car. Bob's so eager to get his fix that he starts shooting up on the way home. As he explains in retrospective voice-over, dope delivered him from the unpredictability of life: "Most people don't know what's going to happen next. But a dope fiend's got a pretty good idea. All you have to do is read the labels on the little bottles." And what happened next, when he shot up, was invariably glorious: "Everything took on the rosy hue of unlimited success. As long as it lasted, life was beautiful."

And, for a while, to Bob and company, the beauty of this drug-engendered escape from reality seems well worth all the trouble of knocking over Rexall's and getting hassled by the fuzz. These kids have *fun* being junkies.

Bruce Bawer is The American Spectator's movie reviewer.

They play games. For example, when two plainclothesmen stake out their second-floor pad from a ladder, Bob tells a neighbor that one of the cops is a peeping tom, and the neighbor—who, quite conveniently, proves to be the neighborhood maniac—blows the lawman away with a rifle. Cute, no? It's not till Bob and his friends leave Portland for a cross-country drive that things turn sour. Bob almost gets caught breaking into a hospital pharmacy; Nadine—who has deliberately flouted the extraordinarily superstitious Bob's injunction against putting a hat on a bed—dies of an overdose. Suddenly Bob does an about-face: he wants to stop doing drugs. Dianne and Rick think he's crazy, and won't have anything to do with it. So Bob returns alone to Portland, takes a monotonous

factory job, rents a grim little apartment, and goes on a 21-day methadone program.

Too bad. For up till Nadine's death the movie has a certain gritty, disturbing power. The characters feel real, the action darkly compelling; though director Gus Van Sant and his co-writer Dan Yost hardly overload the film with plot, they know something about dramatic shape and pacing, and they're gifted with a genuine—if aberrant—wit. (Well, *somebody* is; perhaps it's James Fogle, the Washington State jailbird from whose unpublished, largely autobiographical novel this picture was adapted.) But once Bob returns to Portland the whole contraption falls apart. His transformation doesn't convince for a second. Nor does his explanation help matters much: as he tells

Dianne, he was so freaked out by Nadine's death that he vowed he'd kick the habit if only God or the Devil or Whoever Was Up There helped him get safely through the ordeal of disposing of her body. He stuck to the vow, you see, because he's so superstitious; and he's so superstitious (it's implied) because he was brought up a pious Catholic. But this just doesn't work dramatically, for neither Bob's immoderate superstition nor his Catholicism is ever made to seem a truly integral part of his character; from the moment that it's introduced, the superstition comes off as a feeble joke on the part of the filmmakers, a wacky quirk of character that doesn't quite click into place, while the Catholicism is barely established at all.

Nor do the filmmakers seem to have a clear idea what they're doing in this latter part of the film; the scenes—Bob at work, Bob at an ex-junkie rap session, and so forth—follow each other in a meaningless jumble. And a *dull* jumble, for while the lawless, amoral, drug-addicted Bob of the earlier part of the film is at least interesting to watch, the drug-free Bob is downright boring. The movie flounders badly, then, until its dramatically unsatisfying conclusion—a conclusion whose impact derives entirely from a graphically depicted act of violence, and whose intended irony falls completely flat because it presumes a level of sympathy for Bob, on the part of the audience, that is utterly inconceivable.

And that's a big problem with *Drugstore Cowboy*: Bob is completely, undividedly, and utterly unsympathetic. This young man who doesn't give a moment's thought to anyone else (including the members of his make-



shift "family"), and for whose perfect insensitivity the filmmakers don't even try to hint at a coherent motivation, is impossible to care about. Not only does he lack a single redeeming feature; aside from his superstition, his encyclopedic knowledge of narcotics, and his apparent indifference to sex (quoth Dianne: "Bob's just like a rabbit: in and out, and no nonsense—and that goes for a lot more than a hospital pharmacy"), there isn't much of a character here. Nor do we have any sense of what drove him to drugs in the first place, aside from the aforementioned fact that they made life beautiful. It's part of the implicit argument of this movie, indeed, that drugs *do* make life seem beautiful, that in order to treat the subject of drug addiction realistically a filmmaker must begin by owning up to this fact, and that if there *is* a reason why you can't stick with drugs forever it's surely not that they fail to live up to their rep or that the obligatory criminality might eventually make you

feel remorseful. Which is also part of the problem with this film: Bob doesn't quit drugs because he comes to realize that it's wrong for him to be robbing pharmacies, sponging off society, getting cops shot up, breaking his poor mother's heart, and so forth; nor does he quit because he wants to do himself a favor. Rather, he quits because of an asinine superstition. (As he puts it: "I like drugs. I like the whole life-style. But it just didn't work out.") His reversal is thus both dramatically inert and ethically meaningless.

The moral bankruptcy of the film is underlined by the presence in the later Portland sequences of the elderly Beat novelist William S. Burroughs (*Naked Lunch*, *Junky*). Burroughs plays Tom Murphy, a ruminative, soft-spoken expatriate who is "the most notorious dope fiend on the Coast" and whom Bob (a former altar boy) has known since his childhood. It's a disturbing bit of casting. What, one must ask, is Burroughs doing here? He's arguably the

most despicable creature in the history of American letters (if you don't know why, next time you're in a bookstore grab Ted Morgan's 1988 biography of him, *Literary Outlaw*, and open it to any page), and the filmmakers obviously expect us to recognize him and to identify him with his character. But why? Why place this vile, unscrupulous old monster in the role of a gentle sage to whom Bob says, "You should've been a philosopher"? Are Van Sant and company suggesting that they want their film to be seen as a cinematic counterpart to Burroughs's appalling, amoral, egocentric novels? Certainly some of the film's "wisdom" (e.g., "You can buck the system, but you can't buck the deep forces that lie beneath the surface") sounds suspiciously like the kind of fatuously anarchic and penny-ante mystical nonsense that Burroughs serves up in his books.

The movie has a weird tone, one that combines a TV movie-style earnestness about drug addiction with an irreverent, absurdist waggery about the subject. The film tries to get you to laugh at all sorts of things, at the wacky as well as the grisly—at, for instance, Rick's unrelenting literal-mindedness; at Bob's perverse superstitiousness; at the way Bob's runaway dog (in one of several brief, goofy, extraneous flashbacks) leads the police to his door after a crime; at the sight of that undercover cop being shot by that rifle-toting neighbor; at the way Bob, walking into a room to find Nadine dead, barks, "Who left this hat on the bed?"; at Father Tom's pious gratitude for Bob's stash ("God bless you, my son, may you go to heaven") and his blunt dismissal of certain items contained therein ("This is for squares—never touch the stuff"). Sometimes you do find yourself laughing—and sometimes you find yourself a bit stunned at everyone else's amusement.

and why) and because their satire is given spirit and purpose by a keen, if highly idiosyncratic, moral faculty; in *Drugstore Cowboy*, by contrast, the gags pop up when least expected, and tend (in the "tradition" of Burroughs and his fellow Beats) to be pretentiously and pointlessly nihilistic. The Coens' well-aimed ridicule distances them morally from their characters; Van Sant's scattershot japey makes him seem a veritable accomplice in his characters' anarchic malfiance.

I don't mean to suggest that the film doesn't have some noteworthy assets. Whether because he has developed remarkably as an actor or because he has been allowed here to play a character who is shallow and inarticulate enough not to strain him beyond his limits, Matt Dillon is generally convincing as Bob. Le Gross likewise rings true as the dense and tractable Rick. James Remar, for his part, is very fine as a tenacious Portland cop named Gentry who takes a provocative but ultimately implausible interest in Bob. (Whether the attraction is sexual, or whether Gentry—the very embodiment of law and order—envies Bob's rebelliousness, remains ambiguous.) For the most part, moreover, Robert Yeoman's photography is at once exquisite and appropriately naturalistic—though his terse, surrealistic representations of Bob's drug-induced euphoria feel clumsy and curiously old-fashioned.

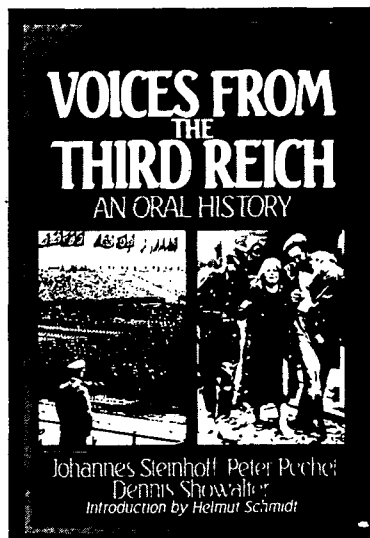
The film offers, then, a vivid close-up view of the world it surveys. Yet its perspective on that world is more than a bit cockeyed. You get the feeling that the filmmakers think there's something potent and honest and unsentimental about their morally neutral, self-centered vision of life, about the fact that Bob—for all he goes through—comes away with little in the way of moral insight ("It's this f---ing life," he says in his valedictory voice-over speech; "you never know what's going to happen next"), and about the irony that Bob's final downfall, after all his years of selfishness, is a direct consequence of the only two generous acts one sees him performing in the entire picture.

Yet, for all its toughness, the film is not free of a certain Beam-style sentimentality. For one thing, the movie opens with a tenderly nostalgic (and a tragi-comic) of the wonderful standard "For All We Know," the romanticism of which may well be intended ironically, though it doesn't come off that way. For another thing, Bob and Dianne, despite their heavy use of narcotics, are as pretty as can be, and look young for their age to boot. This film would've been a lot more respectable a work of art if it had been made in the style of the Coens' *Miller's Crossing*.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Chile was once a country where nothing ever happened. It was known for its democratic tradition and the civility of its political culture, rather like Costa Rica today. But in 1970 it was thrust onto the world stage when Salvador Allende, a charming and literary physician, was unexpectedly elected president, the first time a people had freely opted for Marxism anywhere in the world. Allende upset the balance of the Cold War. Here was an alternative to Bolshevism. He claimed to offer a vision that combined Christian values and socialist institutions, a form of Eurocommunism that was likely to have huge appeal in Italy, France, Spain, and all of South America. Chile became the great hope of the left.

Allende's election was a blow to the United States. In the 1960s Chile had been the showcase of the Alliance for Progress. The Kennedy and Johnson Administrations spent \$2 billion, more per capita than on any other country in the Western Hemisphere, trying to make Chile a shining alternative to Castro's Cuba. It was hard to leave the place alone after investing so much money and enthusiasm. As is now well known, the Nixon Administration got entangled and left enough fingerprints in Chile as to render plausible the accusation that Allende was toppled by American intervention. Indeed, it is almost universally believed that the CIA was behind the military coup in 1973, and the world holds America responsible for the tragic dictatorship that succeeded.

Mark Falcoff argues that something much more interesting actually happened. A fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, he has a passion for Chile and has spent a good part of the last sixteen years mulling over the coup, both its causes and consequences. His brilliant book, somewhat misleadingly entitled *Modern Chile 1970-1989*, is perhaps the most authoritative analysis yet published on the Allende era. It is not an apologia for American foreign policy (and certainly not for Pinochet's police). Instead, after meticulous research Falcoff shows that the Nixon Administration did indeed try to get rid of Allende but did so half-heartedly, without getting anywhere, and soon gave up. When the coup came three years later it was an entirely Chilean affair. Allende brought about his own

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard writes on *Latin America* for the *London Daily Telegraph*.

MODERN CHILE 1970-1989: A CRITICAL HISTORY

Mark Falcoff/Transaction Books/327 pp. \$32.50

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard

downfall (and arguably deserved it).

The Church Committee in 1975 made all kinds of insinuations but was forced to clear the Nixon Administration of involvement in the coup, admitting that there "was no evidence." Nevertheless, the committee did expose the American effort to prevent Allende from taking power in the first place. This was to be done by quasi-constitutional means. According to the Chilean constitution, the Congress was to elect the president if no candidate won an outright majority at the polls, and although it was customary to confirm the candidate with the most votes it was not mandatory. Allende's Popular Unity coalition won only 37 percent of the vote in a three-way race, and therefore needed the support of the (then) center-left Christian Democrats.

The International Telephone and Telegraph Company, which had investments of up to \$200 million in Chile, drew the CIA into a plan to bribe wavering Christian Democrats into joining a conservative coalition in the

Congress. It went nowhere, and the CIA money set aside was never spent. So ITT then came up with a plan to unleash economic chaos in order to frighten the Christian Democrats into voting against Allende. But none of the other American multinationals or banks would go along with it, and again the plan went nowhere. "Thus for all the cable time, telephone calls, meetings, and lunches," writes Falcoff, "... in an operational sense no joint ITT-CIA plan to bribe the Congress or unleash a financial crisis ever existed."

That was Track I. There was also Track II, Nixon's ultra-secret plan for a military coup (intended to install a civilian alternative to Popular Unity, possibly after fresh elections). The CIA was instructed to recruit Chilean officers thought to favor such action, and special weapons were smuggled in through the U.S. diplomatic pouch. It was a fiasco. The plotters accidentally killed the army chief in a kidnap at-

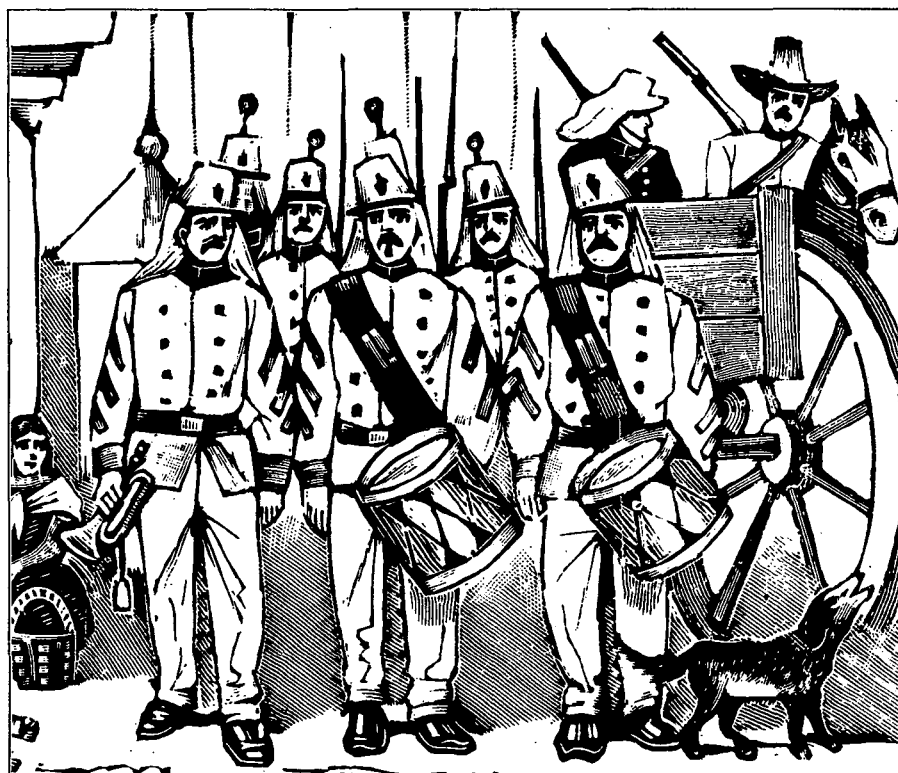
tempt, and the officer corps as a whole stayed loyal to its constitutional tradition.

The CIA was not involved in any further effort to overthrow Allende once he had taken office. Nixon may have threatened to "make the economy scream" but he never followed through. There was no "invisible boycott," even though this has become an article of faith on the left. Chile continued buying American spare parts and machinery, and continued borrowing from American banks. Credit lines were gradually cut as Chile became less and less creditworthy and ultimately defaulted on its foreign debt. The regime enjoyed the benefits of default (a saving of \$243 million in debt service for 1972 alone), without paying the penalty, since it was able to continue borrowing at a reckless level from the Soviet bloc and Western Europe.

The CIA funneled about \$6 million to the Chilean opposition, notably the Christian Democrats and the Santiago newspaper *El Mercurio*. But this was intended to keep pluralism alive at a time when Allende was already using totalitarian tricks to asphyxiate the opposition, and when Popular Unity was comingling the state treasury with its own. A tiny fraction of this American money seeped into the truckers' strike (July-September 1973), which paralyzed the country and set the stage for the coup, but that was in spite of CIA policy. And finally, the Nixon Administration ordered the CIA to keep its distance from the Chilean military in 1973, even to the point of sacrificing intelligence, so that the United States would not be blamed for any coup. A nice irony.

Falcoff makes it clear that whatever the intentions of the Nixon Administration, the effects were almost nil. The purpose of his book is not to exculpate Nixon, but to inculcate Allende; to clear away the fog and confusion that protect the legend, and show that the militant left bears much of the responsibility for the rape of Chile. Allende bankrupted the economy, ran roughshod over Chilean society, and seemed unable to resist pressures from his own party to subvert Chilean democracy and install a totalitarian system. He took the country to the brink of civil war and provoked the coup. He is the father of the messianic and demented General Pinochet.

With hindsight it seems inevitable that the armed forces would step in once Allende went beyond his mandate, but Falcoff makes the fascinating point



that it was not self-evident at the time. In 1965 left-wing officers had taken power in Lima and pushed through a series of radical reforms, sometimes referred to as the Peruvian Revolution. Across the Andes in Argentina the army had spawned Peron. Allende must have thought he could co-opt the Chilean armed forces, for he lavished them with compliments and nearly doubled the defense budget between 1970 and 1973. He brought the high command into his cabinet and enjoyed such an intimate relationship with General Carlos Prats, his interior minister and army chief, that some members of the opposition began to fear a sort of socialist putsch, in which Allende would extinguish Chilean democracy with military support. But Allende could not make up his mind whether to throw in his lot with the army or indulge the extremists on the fringe of his coalition, who were setting up armed militias in the factories and boasting of a forthcoming "sergeants revolution" (i.e., a mutiny) in subverted units of the armed forces.

Allende's Popular Unity was a minority government, based on a third of the vote. It never controlled Congress. Clearly, there was no consensus for revolutionary change in Chile. This was understood by the Communist party, a well-established and respected force in Chilean politics, actually to the right of the Socialist party. Falcoff reminds us that the Communists were the moderates in the Allende coalition, forever trying to restrain the left and keep it within the confines of bourgeois legalism. But the undisciplined "triumfalistas" in Allende's own Socialist party could not be stopped. The Socialists set about the seizure of the Chilean economy at breakneck speed. The mines, banks, railways, steel, petroleum, electricity, and heavy industry fell to the state. Large farms were eliminated. "One cannot but be struck by the drastic nature of these measures, and the actual number of Chileans [one-third] willing to vote for them," writes Falcoff.

Congress would not pass legislation permitting many of these excesses so Allende either had to go beyond the law, or twist it cruelly. If a private company resisted "voluntary" expropriation, for instance, it would suffer the nutcracker: the government would mandate a wage increase and a price freeze at the same time, driving the company into bankruptcy. In other cases the Socialists (and even more extreme groups on the left with links to Allende's family) would stir up labor disputes, allowing the state to take over a factory "temporarily" without having to pay compensation. Once part of the

"Area of Social Property," the factories were almost never returned to the owners, despite court injunctions. Most comic was the treatment of the American copper mining companies, Kennecott and Anaconda, which generated much of Chile's export earnings. They were seized without compensation on the grounds that they had long been earning "excess profits." The propaganda about "excess profits" later came back to haunt Allende because the copper companies soon began to lose money under his management, and he could hardly account for this by admitting that the profit margin had been extremely thin all along.

Needless to say, there was a collapse of investment and the Chilean economy went into a tailspin. The anarchic land reform was accompanied by price controls (a practice that was already ruining Africa), causing a sharp fall in food production and a vibrant black market. The regime then tried to stamp out the black market with further controls, including rationing, which raised suspicions that all distribution was going to be nationalized and turned shopkeepers and truckers into enemies—formidable enemies as it turned out. Allende did not change course, as the Communists were urging. Instead he charged on, covering the huge losses of the state sector with printed money until Chile had the highest rate of inflation in the world.

It was a spectacular example of economic illiteracy. If it had gone on for another three years and Allende had finished his term, the left would have had to face up to its failure. Instead, those who believed that the economic crisis was simply a problem of transition were able to persist in their folly elsewhere. Two of those who worked in the Chilean land reform program, Jaime Wheelock (now Sandinista agriculture minister) and his aide Peter Marchetti (an American Jesuit), have resurfaced in Nicaragua where they have made the same fatal mistakes.

The coup turned everything upside down. Allende became a martyr. Contrasted against the brutal regime that followed, he has blended back into the old democratic order. "General Pinochet and his associates have rescued for Allende and his government a place in Chilean history which they did not earn and to which they could not otherwise have looked forward," concludes Falcoff. Perhaps now that the unhappy saga of the generals is at last coming to an end, the Allende legend will begin to fade and fashionable opinion in the United States will come to see those heady 1,000 days for what they were: a reckless attempt to impose a half-baked form of collectivism on a recalcitrant people. □

VOICES OF GLASNOST: INTERVIEWS WITH GORBACHEV'S REFORMERS

Stephen F. Cohen and Katrina vanden Heuvel/W. W. Norton

339 pp. \$19.95

Arch Puddington

To understand the position held by Stephen F. Cohen and his wife, Katrina vanden Heuvel, think of them not simply as scholar and journalist, but as key members of the intellectual apparatus of a left-wing political party. In the case of Cohen/vanden Heuvel, the party in question is the loose constellation of academics, columnists, and politicians who make up the core of the anti-anti-Communist establishment.

Cohen functions as this party's chief theorist. Despite limited scholarly achievements (mainly a well-received biography of the Bolshevik leader Nikolai Bukharin), he has positioned himself as the outspoken critic of American Sovietology, explaining how our experts misrepresent the Soviet system and how their errors contribute to mistake after mistake in U.S. foreign policy. While his appeal is generally limited to a leftish audience (he wrote the "Sovieticus" column in the *Nation* during the mid-eighties), Cohen was also adviser to the man who briefly shone as the anti-anti-Communists' brightest political star, Gary Hart. Had fate and Donna Rice not intervened, it would have been Cohen rather than Robert Gates advising the American President on policy toward Moscow.

Vanden Heuvel is less theorist than party journalist. Her articles in the *Nation*, where she serves as an editor, diligently expose the sins and "excesses" of government agencies, foreign broadcast services, and Soviet émigré organizations whose brand of anti-Communism she disapproves of (among her targets is my employer, Radio Liberty). Vanden Heuvel is always careful to insert a phrase or two proclaiming support for Soviet dissent, but the practical effect of her writings is to damage the dissident movement and bloody the institutions that provide the dissidents with crucial moral support.

With friends like Miss Vanden Heuvel, the dissidents need no enemies. They are thus probably lucky that, with the exception of the Marxist-leaning

Roy Medvedev, Cohen has generally ignored Soviet dissent and instead focused on the reform forces inside the Soviet establishment. Over the years, Cohen has forged close personal links with the men who have risen to power with Mikhail Gorbachev, even acting as a sounding board for their opinions on internal Soviet developments and U.S.-Soviet relations.

These patient efforts have now been rewarded in a volume of interviews with fourteen of what the book jacket describes as "Gorbachev's reformers." To give credit where it's due, the group brought together in *Voices of Glasnost* is an impressive one, consisting of some of the most influential and controversial personalities in Soviet public life. Among them: Aleksandr Yakovlev, arguably the Soviet Union's second most important official; Yuri Afanasyev, one of the most radical party intellectuals; Aleksandr Bovin, the prominent foreign affairs commentator; Elem Klimov, the film director who led the internal rebellion that brought glasnost to the filmmakers' union; and Nikolai Shmelyov, a decidedly unorthodox Soviet economist. (The one ringer is long-time Kremlin mouthpiece Georgi Arbatov.)

These may be Gorbachev people, but they are also Cohen people in that each outlines a theory of Soviet history which coincides almost precisely with the version Cohen has been peddling. It goes something like this:

The October Revolution was an extraordinary and, on balance, highly progressive event. Contrary to the predominant Western view, the Bolshevik party was surprisingly pluralistic and tolerant of clashing opinions. Likewise, Lenin (whose genius is uncritically accepted) was at heart something of a democrat who came to understand the necessity of a mixed economy, as witness his support for the New Economic Policy (NEP). Tragically, the democratic and humane impulses of the Revolution were crushed by Stalin; it was Stalin and Stalin alone who bears responsibility for Communism's corruption and failure. Khrushchev, by contrast, was a reformer whose great mistake was his failure to build a popular base for change. The conservatism and stagnation of the Brezhnev

Arch Puddington is the author of *Failed Utopias: Methods of Coercion in Communist Regimes*, published by ICS Press. He works for Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty in New York.

period was a hangover from the Stalin era, a continued negation of true Leninism and not evidence of any inherent sickness in the system. Andropov was clearly a reform partisan, but unfortunately expired before real change could be instituted. Reform could come only with the ascendancy of a new generation of Communists, who just happen to be the very people interviewed for *Voices of Glasnost*.

The main problem with the book, however, is not its subjects' tendency to parrot a revised, if less dogmatic line on Soviet history, but their (and the interviewers') reluctance to deal seriously with a number of the most fundamental, and tantalizing, questions of that history and of contemporary Soviet life. Since those interviewed for this volume harbor strong opinions on any number of issues, their unwillingness to go on record on certain key matters, or their adherence to a kind of unofficial but clearly understood line, is a clear sign that some questions remain outside the scope of glasnost.

There is, for example, the intriguing figure of Yuri Andropov, whose name surfaces time and again in these interviews. Andropov functioned as mentor and political sponsor for many members of the current leadership, particularly during the Khrushchev years, when he filled the Central Committee apparatus with would-be reformers. Yet the man often referred to as the godfather of perestroika is the same man who headed the KGB during the period when dissidents were hounded, religious activists harassed, and nonconformists packed off to mental institutions. It was also Andropov, the Soviet media tell us, who along with just three other Soviet leaders made the decision to invade Afghanistan, a move the Soviets now denounce as a monumental blunder. This raises the obvious question of how Andropov's colleagues square his reformist impulses with his role in enforcing policies they claim to abhor. Unfortunately, the question is raised, gingerly, but once, and not pressed when an evasive response is forthcoming.

A second omission is the nationalities question, particularly glaring given the turbulence in the Baltic republics and the Caucasus at the time the interviews were conducted. To be sure, as anti-anti-Communists in good standing Cohen/vanden Heuvel dutifully provide their subjects with opportunities to distance themselves from the ultra-Russianism of the right-wing Pamyat society. Aleksandr Yakovlev uses the opening to offer the standard Soviet denunciation of all forms of nationalism as "repugnant," "alien," "dis-

gusting." Yet Yakovlev, like (apparently) all the other personalities in *Voices of Glasnost*, is himself a Russian, and therefore a member of the ruling nation. (The Soviet leadership is even more Russified under Gorbachev than under Brezhnev.) What do Yakovlev and the rest think about Baltic demands for independence? Or about the system's failure to develop the Leninist ideal of a "Soviet man"? These crucial questions are never asked.

Another disappointment is the treatment of Soviet foreign policy. Again, a distressing sameness predominates. The invasion of Afghanistan and the placement of the SS-20s—in other words, the two actions of the Brezhnev regime that already have drawn sharp disapproval from high Gorbachev circles—are ritualistically deplored. Yet the traditional Soviet posture that weapons systems—and not more traditional political maneuvers—sustained the superpower rivalry is maintained. Naturally, the U.S. is given the lion's share of blame for the Cold War. With the exception of a few comments of distress over the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the subjugation of Eastern Europe is never broached. On the other hand, the authors serve up numerous opportunities for sneering at America, all of which are eagerly taken up. Aleksandr Yakovlev, who in the bad old days made his reputation writing vitriol about the United States, insists that Soviet democracy, once perfected, will be more genuine than the American version. The Soviets, he claims, "interpret democracy more broadly than you do. We don't limit it to participation in elections," a remark that will ring strangely familiar to anyone who followed Communist declarations on democracy in the benighted days before glasnost. Yevgeny Velikhov, a lead-

"The one possible exception is Georgi Arbatov, who is widely believed to be Jewish. The authors are too polite to raise this sensitive issue, although they do probe Arbatov's views on Jewish emigration. Arbatov's response is interesting. He contends it was a mistake to make one or several groups the focus of emigration policy. He also claims that demands for Jewish emigration created a backlash, with employers and universities refusing to hire or admit Jews for fear they would one day leave the country. This, of course, is not true: Jews were discriminated against because of official anti-Semitism, which was widespread under Brezhnev, as Arbatov is well aware. Arbatov also claims to have warned that tying détente to emigration would generate anti-Jewish sentiment in both the Soviet Union and the United States, another bit of fiction, since, in the U.S., widespread sympathy toward Jews was evoked by the persecution of the refuseniks. It hardly needs to be added that, as the quintessential Soviet man, Arbatov does not even consider the possibility that Jews wanted to leave because of official policies of religious suppression.

ing figure in both the Brezhnev and Gorbachev scientific apparatus, manages to compare Edward Teller with Trofim Lysenko, Stalin's quackish science czar.

The authors' unwillingness to challenge the presuppositions of Gorbachevism is especially lamentable in view of the unusually high caliber of their subjects. The figures often come across as admirable, idealistic, and competent, precisely the kind of people who would be valued in a government committed to change. Although none suffered the tragic fates of genuine dissidents, they were forced to absorb the routine humiliations and frustrations endemic to the Khrushchev and Brezhnev periods, evidently without succumbing to the rampant careerism and cynicism of the day.

Thus the sociologist Tatyana Zaslavskaya recounts participating in a research team that fell victim to an of-

ficial investigation because its findings—on comparative labor productivity in the U.S. and USSR—clashed with figures cited in a speech by Khrushchev. The economist Nikolai Shmelyov abandoned a promising career as a writer because a journal editor tacked a happy ending on to one of his short stories. One of Elem Klimov's best films sat on the shelf for years because the official filmmakers' bureaucracy objected to its treatment of historical issues. Yegor Ligachev, the editor of *Moscow News*, lost several journalistic positions because of his independent opinions.

But even these fascinating stories leave the reader regretting the lack of any serious analysis of political life before glasnost. What compromises were made, and how were they rationalized? How did humane-minded Soviet intellectuals respond to the nasty fates of colleagues who lacked their skill in navigating the system? How, to take an obvious case, does Georgi Arbatov justify his past defense of pol-

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**ETHICS, POLITICS
and the
INDEPENDENT
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**Executive Power
Executive Vice
1789–1989**

by
TERRY EASTLAND

Terry Eastland, journalist and author,
is the Presswatch Columnist
for the *American Spectator*.

Ethics, Politics, and the Independent Counsel is available from the **National Legal Center for the Public Interest**, 1000 16th Street, N.W., Suite 301, Washington, D.C. 20036. 189pp./\$10.95 paper. By phone: (202) 296-1683.

icies now derided as manifestations of the "old thinking"? The authors were too polite, or too crafty, to ask.

However, Cohen/vanden Heuvel do perform a service by drawing out some revealing observations on Lenin and Leninism, both of which the subjects endorse unhesitatingly. There are frequent references to the need for "real Leninism" and a "return to the twen-

ties," when Lenin's ideals presumably held sway. Support is voiced for even that most undemocratic of Lenin's innovations, democratic centralism, the precept that permits no further debate once a party decision is reached, and also prohibits the organization of intra-party factions. Since those interviewed also dismiss the need for a multiparty system, the question arises: How are er-

roneous policies to be combatted? One of the most troubling responses comes from Yuri Afanasyev, a man perestroika intellectuals regard as a radical. Asked if there should no longer be a party line on historical matters, Afanasyev replies:

I can't imagine there being two lines in one party. Even if there are various schools of

thought and points of view, it is possible to reach a consensus to reach the truth, and thus to arrive at a party line based on real scholarship.

Cohen/vanden Heuvel also elicit intriguing commentary on the economics of perestroika. Thus far, Western experts see the changes introduced by Gorbachev as little more than tinkering with a system that needs a dramatic overhaul. The book's participants do not dispute this observation; they even speak frankly of the difficulties inherent in bringing about so basic a reform as a rational price structure. At the same time, one is struck by the limited perspectives of those committed to change. Aleksandr Yakovlev, while admitting the necessity of letting the market determine the price of basic goods, defends the policy of massive subsidies on the grounds that "we want bread and meat and milk at cheap prices and not the way it is in the West," and speaks of the government's intention of creating something called a "socialist market." Coming from a leading political figure, Yakovlev's ignorance of economics may in part be tactical. More disconcerting are the comments of the economist Shmelyov. Although he admits that popular support for egalitarianism poses a psychological hurdle to even limited experiments with free enterprise, he himself seems to have been infected by the general Soviet hostility toward "capitalist exploitation," as reflected in his statement that a thousand people working for one entrepreneur would be "clearly immoral."

It is revelations like these that give *Voices of Glasnost* some value. Too bad the authors saw their primary role as merely assembling evidence to buttress their own special theory of Soviet history. Unfortunately, for the authors, the least convincing parts of their book are precisely the sections they consider most significant: the attempts to shove responsibility for the system's failures on the shoulders of one man, Stalin, and the tortured, and transparent, assurances that the Soviet Union never really posed a threat to American interests or security. One should not, however, be too harsh on Cohen/vanden Heuvel. The assignment they have undertaken—to convince Americans that the anti-Communist idea is the result of a misinterpretation of history or a cynical ploy by certain elites—is preordained to failure. As each night Americans watch the gathering revolt in the non-Russian republics, or the headlong collapse of Communist rule in Eastern Europe, they well understand that the system which generated this turbulence is suffering not just from temporary deformities, but from terminal illness. □

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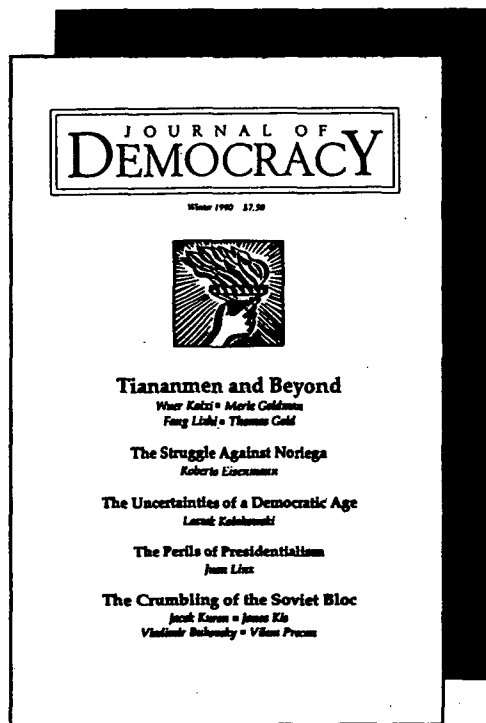
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THE LONE STAR: THE LIFE OF JOHN CONNALLY

James Reston, Jr./Harper & Row/691 pp. \$18.95

Victor Gold

Nothing reflects the political acumen of the American corporate board room better than its overwhelming support of John Connally for the 1980 Republican presidential nomination. Business wanted a sure winner, and who could doubt, watching Connally strut across the political landscape during the 1960s and '70s, that he was destined to succeed. Jimmy Carter in the Oval Office?

Ronald Reagan was too old. George Bush? He lacked fire-in-the-belly. But Big Tex, by God, was a born leader who looked like a President and talked like a President. There was the jutting jaw; the coiffed silver mane; the elegant tailoring; and the attention-getting way he pounded fist-against-lectern when he warned the Japanese that, if elected, he'd see to it that Toyotas would gather rust on the docks at Yokohama.

All very impressive. But as biographer James Reston, Jr. tells it, impressing folks was what John Connally did best, from the moment he arrived in Washington as Congressman Lyndon Johnson's aide and took up residence at the venerable Dodge House on Capitol Hill. The jutting jaw, the pampered hair, were all part of the act. Connally worked on it, day and night, a sagebrush Jay Gatsby creating a public persona to move him along in his chosen profession. From the very beginning, back in 1938, he understood the importance of superficial assets in a superficial town.

"Around the Dodge, Connally became somewhat notorious for his narcissism," writes Reston. "He was particularly fascinated by his own hair, and he would, by Luther Jones's account, stand for hours before a mirror brushing it. 'He'd look at his hair, and he'd brush it, and he'd brush it. Oh boy, he'd lovingly caress it.'"

Portrait of the future President manqué as a young narcissist. But for all the snickers it drew from Connally's friends at the Dodge, the preening paid off. In time he became Lyndon Johnson's second self when a stand-in was needed to stroke a fat-cat contributor, screw a political enemy, or put the final touches on the Duval County vote steal

Victor Gold is The American Spectator's national correspondent.

that sent "Landslide Lyndon" to the U.S. Senate by a razor-thin margin in 1948.

No doubt about it, John Connally, beyond the preening, had a fair share of serviceable political skills; but never as many as he believed or led others to believe. "You will be measured in this town," he once told Henry Kissinger, "by the enemies you destroy. The bigger they are, the bigger you will be." That was Connally in the role of the macho pol, no doubt impressing Kissinger with his instinct for *Realpolitik*. Big Tex could always talk a good game; but in the end, no matter how long or hard he brushed, the biggest thing John Connally destroyed was himself.

Reston's book on Connally comes out at a time when Robert Caro's second volume on LBJ is being serialized and two new biographies of Richard Nixon—one by Stephen Ambrose, the other by Robert Morris—are also reaching book stores. The temptation is to recommend *The Lone Star* for reading as a supplement to those presidential biographies, but that would do Reston, not to mention his subject, an injustice. Connally's biography can stand on its own, despite the man's failure to reach the top rung. There is a case to be made that political failure makes a better story than political success anyway—*Richard III* beats *Henry V* as drama on any given evening—and Reston has done a marvelous job telling the Connally story, from his early years of promise to his dismal decline into political and financial ruin, seated in the second row at his own bankruptcy auction with "an enormous unlit Macanudo panatella in his mouth."

Don't ask what was going through Connally's mind as he watched his prized possessions sold off. It was obvious, as Reston makes clear, that Big Tex was not a public figure given to reflection or remorse. He saw himself, writes Reston, as the personification of his native state, "the incarnation" of its financial collapse during the 1980s. "When he spoke of Texas," says Reston, "it was as if he were speaking about himself."

From that alone it is easy to see why Connally and Lyndon Johnson, two

egos in search of an incarnation, were a perfectly matched political couple. What is more difficult to understand is how Lyndon's protégé—"the incarnation" of every federal excess that Republicans railed against during the Kennedy-Johnson years—went on to become the man Richard Nixon considered best qualified to succeed him as President.

Reston's well-detailed story of the way in which the Nixon White House wooed Connally—with Big Tex allowing that the only cabinet posts he *might* consider were State or Treasury—tells us as much about Nixon's overrated political perspicacity as it does about Connally's chutzpah. Not only did Nixon fall over himself to bring Connally into his fold, but he elevated his Democratic convert to the highest level. Connally was considered, in Kissinger's words, the administration's "best political brain."

Indeed. And with the 1972 election coming up, what better reason was there to trust the judgment of Lyndon Johnson's protégé when, as secretary of the Treasury, John Connally proposed the pluperfect Democratic answer to cooling an economy overheated from LBJ's guns-and-butter policy of the 1960s? Wage-and-price controls, that was the ticket.

A shrewd political move, all right. That it did nothing to help the administration with business, labor, or the voting public, and also proved to be an economic disaster, did nothing to dampen Nixon's faith in John Connally's judgment. And had there been no Watergate, Nixon would undoubtedly have made Connally his choice for the Republican presidential nomination in 1976; in which year, if my understanding of Reston's biography is clear, Jimmy Carter would have been elected by roughly the same margin that he defeated Gerald Ford in the actual event. For beyond first impressions, John Connally's career as a *national* politician (as distinguished from the bullshit Texas variety) was characterized, in the downhome phrase he frequently used to describe others, as all hat and no cattle.

As secretary of the Navy and governor of Texas, Connally held his own, though with little impact on the national scene (Reston's mind-rupturing theory that Oswald was trying to kill Connally, not Kennedy, in Dallas notwithstanding). As a presidential contender in his own right, however, Big Tex learned that hairstyling and swagger can take a political hustler only so far. Once beyond the corporate board room, he proved to be one of the worst candidates in modern history, a laughing-stock best remembered as the

jaw-jutter who paid \$11 million to pick up one delegate. But then, of course, Nixon was said to have been awed not only by Connally's political savvy but his business acumen as well. Thus we pick up the story of Big Tex, as told by James Reston, Jr., after his political fall:

In the expectation of oil selling at more than \$35 a barrel, fortunes were a declension of good, better, and best. . . . Connally want-

Fred Godsey

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ed a piece of it. After the humiliation of his \$11 million delegate, his political career was over, and he turned his back on it with a vengeance, doing nothing to retire the debt his campaign had accumulated and leaving bitterness behind with such aides as Jim Brady and David Parker, who had put tens of thousands of their modest personal savings behind the Connally campaign, only to find that, after defeat, Connally felt no obligation to them whatever . . ."

Lyndon's son, the businessman. When he went bust not long after, Big Tex blamed it all on the collapse of the oil market. He was the victim, argued Connally, of economic conditions beyond his control. There are still those in Texas, it's said, who take him at his word. Not many, but some. And why shouldn't they? John Connally, after all, cuts a very impressive figure. □

LETTERS FROM A WAR ZONE: WRITINGS 1976-1989

Andrea Dworkin/E. P. Dutton/337 pp. \$18.95

Florence King

Mothers of book reviewers are famed for advising their young, "If you can't say something nasty, don't say anything at all." Books by feminists usually bring out the dutiful daughter in me. One feminist in particular has always struck me as such a threat to the Edenic arrangement that she calls to mind the childhood rhyming game that left the unwary in pain: "Adam and Eve and Pinch-Me-Tight/ went down to the river to have a fight/ When Adam and Eve were swept out of sight/ Who was left?"

Andrea Dworkin.

She is the author of such sanguinary non-fiction works as *Woman Hating*; *Our Blood: Prophecies and Discourses on Sexual Politics*; and *Intercourse*, an oddly decorous title for a radical feminist, in which she defines the sex act as a "scarring, hurting, jagged edge of pain and grief," and delivers herself of a comparison that ranks as a classic Dworkinism: "Intercourse and women's inequality are like Siamese twins, always in the same place at the same time, pissing in the same pot." She also published a novel, *Ice and Fire*, wherein intercourse becomes "coitus" ("Coitus is the punishment for being a woman"), and a chapter epigraph is taken from Baudelaire: "Don't look for my heart any more; the beasts have eaten it."

I panned *Intercourse* and *Ice and Fire* in a dual review in *Newsday* three years ago and fully intended to do another hatchet job on *Letters From a War Zone*. But I can't. As they say in the soaps, I tried, God knows I tried, but once I got into this book I kept running up against an indisputable fact: Andrea Dworkin emerges here as a

rock 'em, sock 'em Carrie Nation who has won my admiration and respect.

Letters From a War Zone is an extremely discrete collection of articles and literary criticism written over the past thirteen years. Most of the articles are about Dworkin's work in the anti-obscenity organization Women Against Pornography, and the "Take Back the Night" marches the group has staged against porn shops and theaters showing "snuff" movies in which women are raped and tortured.

Dworkin's bête noire is the American Civil Liberties Union. Calling them "radical boy lawyers" with "aging penises" who are "afraid that feminists are going to take their dirty pictures away from them," she heaps scorn on their monomaniacal defense of First

Amendment guarantees of free speech, and demolishes their fashionable leftist claim that porn is socially redeeming and culturally valuable by pointing out that the days of erotically decorated Grecian urns are over:

When pornography was in fact writing, etching, or drawing it was possible to consider it something exclusively cultural, something on paper not life. . . . Since the invention of the camera, any such view of pornography is completely despicable and corrupt. These are real women being tied and hung, gutted and trounced on, whipped and pissed on, gang-banged and hit, penetrated by dangerous objects and animals. . . . Where is the famous *humanist* outcry? . . . an outcry that we might expect if dogs or cats were being treated the same way. . . .

In a merciless essay, "The ACLU: Bait and Switch," she tells the story of how she was snookered into joining the organization. In 1975, at the height of the feminist movement, she received an invitation from the ACLU on letterhead studded with the names of prominent women. Although she had only earned \$1,679 that year, she sent them a \$15 membership fee. Once she had joined, however, the subsequent letters she received were written on stationery containing nothing but male names. Accusing them of the old "bait and switch" scam, she demanded and got her money back.

In the next few years, the ACLU castigated anti-porn feminists for their "contempt of free speech" and rushed to defend pornographers, as well as Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan. "The pornographers give them lots of money," Dworkin says. "The Nazis and the Klan they help on principle. It's their form of charity work. While we feminists piddled around, the ACLU was

doing the serious business of defending freedom."

In 1981, still on the ACLU's mailing list, Dworkin received a fund-raising letter signed by none other than Mr. McGoo himself, George McGovern.

The letter said that the ACLU was fighting the Right, the Moral Majority, the Right to Life Movement, the New Right, and the evangelical Right. . . . Reading it, one could only believe the passion and purpose of the ACLU was to triumph over the terrible and terrifying Right. And what were the Nazis and the Klan, I asked myself. Chopped liver?

Dworkin contends that the ACLU doesn't even know the difference between the right and left because it does not know the meaning of distinction.

It is time for the ACLU to come clean. Its fight is not against the Right in any form, including the Moral Majority or opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment (as Mr. McGovern's letter claims). Its fight is for an absence of distinctions. . . . I am tired of the sophistry of the ACLU and also of its good reputation among progressive people. . . . There is nothing as dangerous as an unembodied principle: no matter what blood flows, the principle comes first. The First Amendment absolutists operated precisely on unembodied principle. . . .

She also casts a cold eye on the claim of professional Helpists that pornography cures frigidity and impotence and saves marriages. "Pornography is now used in increasing numbers of medical schools and other institutions of higher learning that teach 'human sexuality' . . . its apologists are everywhere." As for the endless academic research about the effects of pornography, Dworkin, who describes herself as a self-educated writer, replies with the horse sense so often found in people who did not go to college: "I am entirely outraged that someone has to study whether hanging a woman from a meat hook causes harm or not."

Dworkin's difficulties in getting articles past editors who abhor censorship are legion. A collegiate Law Review editor who got a lump in his throat whenever he thought about the First Amendment insisted on major changes in a piece she wrote for him, and turned it down when she refused to make them. She then submitted the piece to the anti-censorship *Harvard Women's Law Journal*, who tried to censor it further and eventually forced her to make some compromises. In her assessment of this run-around Dworkin manifests a refreshingly unfeminist dry wit: "Why did I have to run this gauntlet to get this essay in print? Misogyny, stupidity, and the arrogance of children aside, this editing business



Florence King's last book, *Reflections in a Jaundiced Eye*, is a *Literary Guild* selection. A companion volume, *Lump It or Leave It*, will be published in 1990 by St. Martin's Press.

has gotten out of hand; it has become police work for liberals.”

The essay “Pornography Is a Civil Rights Issue” contains her testimony before the Attorney General’s Commission on Pornography in 1986, when feminist supporters of the “sexual revolution” and representatives of *Penthouse*, who sat with ACLU lawyers, heckled her as she spoke.

In the stark Q&A duel, undecorated with exposition, she rises to such Boudicean heights of dignity and fighting spirit that a priest on the commission, the Rev. Bruce Ritter, thanked her for her “extraordinary and very moving testimony.”

Challenged on her belief in an organized boycott of pornography, she replied in words that warm the cockles of a right-wing heart:

I grew up in an era when people were prepared not to eat lettuce, not to eat grapes, not to eat tuna fish under certain circumstances when the tunas weren’t being caught the right way. And the reality is that that constituency who went so long without lettuce, who went so long without grapes, consumes pornography and defends pornography. . . . I am asking you to help the exploited, not the exploiters. . . . I am asking you as individuals to have the courage, because I think it’s what you will need, to actually be willing yourselves to go and cut that woman down and untie her hands and take the gag out of her mouth, and to do something, to risk something, for her freedom.

Dworkin does not seem to realize—or perhaps want to realize—just how conservative she has become. Describing the warm reception she got at a Toronto symposium on porn and media violence, her bemused innocence is almost comical. “The audience was mostly right-wing. . . . I am happy to say that the audience responded with a very long, loud, standing ovation. I believe that this speech was a breakthrough in reaching right-wing women.”

Her opinion of “mainstream” feminism certainly reaches right-wing women—it’s the same opinion held by Phyllis Schlafly: “In the United States, there is a feminist establishment, twenty years in the making, media-created and media-controlled, that is fairly corrupt, bought out by the privilege of its own prominence.”

The stern purity with which Dworkin views her calling serves as an inspiration to conservative writers in a liberal-dominated industry: “Writers get underneath the agreed-on amenities, the lies a society depends on to maintain the status quo, by becoming ruthless, pursuing the truth in the face of intimidation, not by being compliant or solicitous.

And as for the *eminence grise* that wraps the fish: “I have never been able to publish anything on the op-ed page of the *New York Times*, even though

I have been attacked by name and my politics and my work have been denounced editorially so many times over the last decade that I am dizzy from it.”

All this is not to say that *Letters From a War Zone* is without fault. One of the early pieces, a 1978 self-interview intended to parody the

many self-interviews of Norman Mailer, does not come off. Among other things, it founders on Dworkin’s wish that she could go back in time and sleep with George Sand to save her from all those men, and sinks like a stone with the statement, “I wish Bella were King.”

Her critique of *Wuthering Heights* veers off into a tortured examination of racism simply because Heathcliff

was swarthy and described as a “gypsy brat.” A welter of early-feminist psychobabble (dominance, vulnerability, androgynous ideal) obscures what was very likely the simple truth: having been abandoned on the streets of Liverpool, Heathcliff was probably Black Irish like the Brontes themselves. Dworkin’s description of sexual harassment in a snowbound airport in 1978 throbs with feminist obsessiveness:

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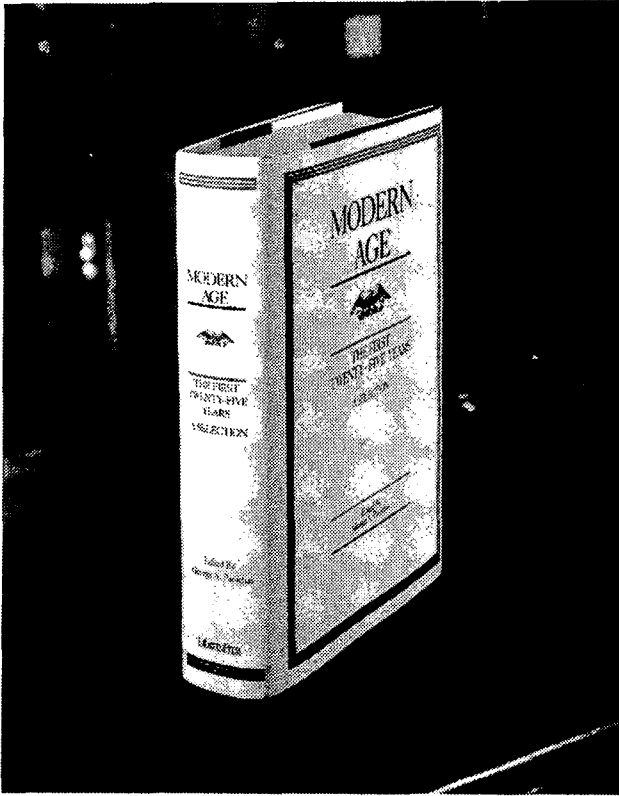
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Most of the bored passengers-to-be are men. As men wait, they drink. The longer they wait, the more they drink. After a few hours, an airport on a stormy day is filled with drunken, cruising men who fix their sloppy attention on the few lone women. . . . Having been followed, harassed, and "seductively" called dirty names, [by] ready-to-pounce men. . . . [e]xiting from the plane, I was, in the crush, felt up quickly but definitively by one of the men who had been trailing me.

Why is this always happening to radical feminists? It never happened to me, not even back when my weight was twenty pounds lower than my I.Q. Now that I've "caught up," as they say in affirmative-action circles, the only thing traveling men want from me is the aisle seat.

She still indulges in occasional Dwor-kinese: "On the pedestal, immobile like waxen statues, or in the gutter, failed icons mired in shit. . . ." There are enough references to incest for a small monograph called *The Uncle From M.A.N.*, as well as a trite bow to those famous "ancient matriarchies" that came into being in the early 1970s when feminists took up anthropology a go-go and drained Atlantis.

Her continuing attacks on capitalism and her insistence that property rights are somehow at odds with human rights fly in the face of Fisher Ames's dictum: "By securing property, life and liberty can scarcely fail of being secured: where property is safe by rules and principles, there is liberty, for the objects and motives of tyranny are removed." (I.e., if you can't seize prop-

erty, why bother?) Finally, she persists in the sophomoric spelling of "Amer-ika" that long ago became one of her trademarks.

Nonetheless, I can't remember when I have been so happy to be wrong about

someone. I began reading this book in the spirit of such unabashed prejudice that I was even prepared to blame Andrea Dworkin for the Orioles' loss of the American League East, but now I like her. □

CRASHING THE GATES: THE DE-WASPING OF AMERICA'S POWER ELITE

Robert C. Christopher/Simon and Schuster/304 pp. \$19.95

OUR KIND OF PEOPLE: THE STORY OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY

Jonathan Yardley/Weidenfeld & Nicolson/336 pp. \$19.95

SUMMER LIGHT

Roxana Robinson/Viking/200 pp. \$16.95

Franz M. Oppenheimer

"How but in custom and in ceremony
are innocence and beauty born?"

—W. B. Yeats
(*"A Prayer for My Daughter"*)

The most useful part of Robert Christopher's book is the demonstration in its very beginning that Wasps never were exclusively what they were supposed to be: white Anglo-Saxon Protestants. The Drexels of Philadelphia "were originally Austrian Catholics," the Mellons were Irish, Pershing and Hoover came from German families named Pfoerchin and Huever, Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts descended from a colonial governor of Massachusetts named James Sullivan, William C. Bullitt had among his ancestors one Haym Solomon, and, to put an arbitrary end to this litany, C. Douglas Dillon's paternal grandfather was Sam Lupowski, the son of a Polish Jew and a French woman born Dillon. From these and many other illustrations Christopher concludes that there is "only one infallible standard" for determining who is a Wasp: "If you behave like a Wasp and are so regarded by others," you are one. In short, Christopher recognizes that the appellation "Wasp," which he says had not appeared in print before 1962, usually refers not to ethnicity but to social class: to an upper class that was intact until the end of the 1950s and that, in the words of Roxana Robinson, was a "network of intricate bloodlines and familiarity that stretched from Bar Harbor to Hobe Sound."

Thus Christopher corrects the common assumption that until twenty-five years ago non-Wasps were barred from the American establishment. The presence of Wasps was preponderant but not exclusive; a reality obscured because non-Wasps of the old establish-

ment, the Dillons, Drexels, and Bullitts, were perceived as Wasps.

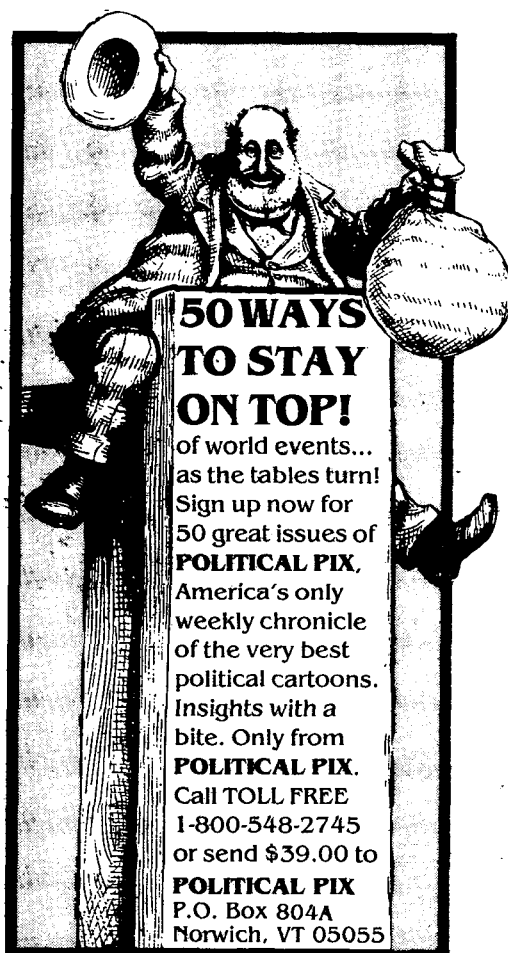
Having made this important point, Christopher proceeds to persuade the reader of something that anybody literate enough to open his book has known for years, that Wasps, ethnically defined, no longer dominate anything, that the code of values, customs, dress, and prohibitions of the old American upper class no longer circumscribes our present rulers, and that belonging to an ethnic group does not automatically make one a Democrat or a Republican. The first of these points could best have been made statistically. Instead, however, Christopher gives a few select statistical data only about another phenomenon, also known to all, namely the high rate of intermarriage among white American ethnic groups. Otherwise he proceeds by amassing, seemingly at random, anecdotes, names, and thumbnail biographies to demonstrate that the higher echelons of politics, business, commerce, finance, the law, the great foundations, the universities, the New York Council on Foreign Relations, the media, show business, publishing and writing, the Foreign Service, the clubs, and the military, all now comprise a fascinating mixture of all sorts and conditions of ethnicity. This method quickly becomes wearisome. Only people who read telephone books and *Who's Who in America* for pleasure will be able to plow through *Crashing the Gates* without groaning.

Christopher does touch on one important development, the growth of a new conformity, a common culture, within the various establishments. But just as he fails to describe, to say nothing of analyze, the values of the old Wasp establishments he keeps talking about, so he fails to tell us anything meaningful about the new common culture. This double failure prevents him from posing the important questions raised by the social changes he has catalogued. As a conventional

liberal, he takes it for granted that those changes, amounting to the disappearance of a traditional upper class, are all to the good. Characteristic of this "non-judgmental" attitude is his apparent assumption that what was once known as "café society," the kind of people described in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, living in 34-room Park Avenue duplexes with "Rubens in the drawing room, Renoir in the bath," and counting among them a "queen of nouvelle society," is just as good an upper class as any other.

Yet every day the morning newspapers and the evening news must make us aware that whatever conformity may now be imposed on those on the top, or on the way to it, it is not a conformity with the kind of values that keep people out of jail. When Richard Hay Whitney went to jail for having mishandled trust funds in 1938, that one man's lapse then created more of a sensation than a score of misdeeds in high places today.

Neither of the other two books under review explicitly addresses this question of what has gone wrong, but both of them wrestle with it. They both document something that Christopher refers to, with a quote from Norman Podhoretz, as "the collapse of Wasp self-confidence." Jonathan Yardley's title *Our Kind of People*—a phrase that also appears in Christopher's book—is used ironically in attacking the snobbery of his parents. But Yardley's ambivalence appears right in his book's subtitle "The Story of an American Family," which can be read as meaning the story of his family through many generations, or merely the biography of his father and, to a lesser extent, his mother (which is probably the meaning Yardley had intended). Be that as it may, Jonathan Yardley, the self-painted rebel against the snobbery and ancestor-worship of his father, cannot let go of his ancestors and tells us far more about the Yardleys, the Gregor-ys, the Thornes, the Ingersolls, the MacNeills, and the Woolseys than most readers of his book will want to know. He does this even when he introduces a very remote ancestor, Sir George Temperance, with the only apparent purpose of criticizing the use his father, after arriving in Virginia as headmaster of Chatham Hall, made of that seventeenth-century governor of Virginia as a "ticket to the great mansions of the Tidewater—which soon enough he began pronouncing 'Tahd-woe-tuh'—and as authentication of his own standing among the First Families of Virginia." It was hardly necessary for that snide purpose to give us two pages of biography of the noble baron from his birth at Southwark, England, in 1588 to his



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Franz M. Oppenheimer, a frequent contributor, is a Washington lawyer.

death in Jamestown, Virginia, as "the largest landowner in Virginia" in 1627. The evidence is convincing that Yardley is just as proud of his Wasp and upper-class ancestors as his father Bill was, but he has been too much exposed to liberal brainwashing to express that pride except by indirection.

I met Bill Yardley during the last year of his headmastership of Chatham Hall in southern Virginia, when making the rounds of boarding schools with my daughter. If he was an anti-Semite, as his son alleges, he certainly was a superb actor in hiding that failing from the Oppenheims. We enrolled our daughter in Chatham Hall because we were impressed by Bill Yardley's stature, sense of humor, kindness, and educational philosophy. Later, when for twelve years I was a trustee of this school, I came to appreciate the legacy Bill Yardley had left: at a time when most first-rate American boarding schools indulged in extremes of intellectual snobbery and thereby made all but the most intellectually brilliant students feel inferior, Chatham Hall managed—as it continues to do—to combine a commitment to intellectual excellence with an appreciation of other human qualities, which makes for a happy climate in which all can grow.

Jonathan Yardley gives us traces of those wonderful qualities of his father, but they are lost in a welter of negative observations and judgments purporting to look behind the mask, and he sees motives, mostly base, that only God, and certainly not a son, can discern with certainty. We have known, since Kretschmer, that all human actions spring from a bundle of motives, of which the ethically most acceptable are the most conscious but the least dynamic, whereas those linked to basic human drives are the most dynamic but the least conscious. Thus, it may well be, as Yardley tells us, that professional ambition was instrumental in his father's decision at the age of thirty-six to become an Episcopal priest. But was ambition the *only* motive? Even though "he was informed [when being interviewed for the headmastership of Chatham Hall] that preference would be given to a candidate who was an Episcopal minister," and "he promptly let it be known that he was prepared to assume the cloth," it is equally true that "no records exist as to whether entering the ministry was a specific condition of his employment by Chatham Hall," and that he embarked on the arduous course of theological study required for ordination *after* he had become headmaster. Moreover, it would have been inconceivable for the trustees to dismiss Bill Yardley for having failed to comply with what at most was a casual understanding. Bill Yardley had

other and nobler motives for entering the ministry: "There comes a point in the life of a schoolman when the discipline and authority of the Church as well as its spiritual guidance and security stand like a rock in a chaotic world. You can go only so far in the training of young people without it."

It seems preposterous to interpret this *cri de coeur*, as Jonathan Yardley does, as "the words not of a man who had heard his call, but of one who wanted a job so badly that he was ready to change his life in order to obtain it." That is the comment of a son who has not yet come to terms with his father having been human and whose actions, however noble, are the result of many motives.

Yardley's comments about his father's entering the ministry are only one of many open or veiled attacks against his parents' way of life and hierarchy of values. These attacks are so pervasive that filial disappointment is unlikely to have been their only cause. They also reflect "the collapse of Wasp self-confidence," a generic and not only an individual weakness. Yet unlike Robert Christopher, Jonathan Yardley does not blithely assume that there is a new and better substitute for the kind of elite to which his father belonged. The son mostly knows what he dislikes, but what he likes—including Cardinal Newman's marvelous collect "O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen . . ." said at his parents' funerals and which "in time" will be said "for the four children whom they brought into the world"—remains through all his bitterness a reflection of his parents' values.

It is therefore no accident that Yardley, the *Washington Post's* literary critic, dwells at some length on his parents' love of the novels of John P. Marquand, an author to whom he has also devoted two of his recent columns. Yet neither Yardley, nor the writer of a recent article on Marquand in *Commentary*, recognizes that Marquand was not primarily a satirist of upper-class Wasps, but a social critic who, unlike Yardley or Christopher, did not let the weaknesses of his Wasp heroes blind him to the far greater ones of those taking their place. Thirty years ago I tried to show that *The Late George Apley*, Marquand's first great success as a serious novelist, was not primarily a satire but a picture of a golden age and of, in Edmund Burke's phrase, an unbought grace of life.¹ Marquand anticipated already in 1955,

¹Franz M. Oppenheimer, "Lament For Unbought Grace: The Novels of John P. Marquand" (*The Antioch Review*, January 1959).

when he wrote *Sincerely Willis Wayde*, what was being substituted for the old establishment: Willis Wayde is the modern corporate top executive, unfettered by tradition, ancestor worship, art, literature, religion, or reflection on anything other than his and his company's bottom line. Moreover, Marquand's novels trace the "collapse of Wasp self-confidence" from the certainties of George Apley in the Boston of the beginning of this century, to the self-doubts and weaknesses of the generation of Apley's children, for instance, in New York of the 1920s and '30s, that of *H. M. Pulham, Esq.* (1940), and in the Washington of the New Deal, in *B. F.'s Daughter*. Before *Willis Wayde* Marquand had described in *Point of No Return* how even in the then still tradition-bound and Wasp environment of a staid New York bank the gross commercialism of newer men unsettled the even tenor of an upper-class Wasp's life. In short, Marquand tackled the ambiguities of Jonathan

Yardley and the certainties of Robert Christopher forty years ago.

In truth these issues are better dealt with, now as then, by novelists, rather than family chroniclers or pop or other sociologists.

Roxana Robinson's first novel, *Summer Light*, is a case in point. The novel's heroin, Laura, is a young woman in her twenties of Eastern seaboard upper-class Wasp stock. Her father had rebelled against status, but not against puritan principles. He converted to Quakerism, and from investment banking with Morgan Stanley to editing a small-town newspaper in Maryland. Her parents' "lives had been governed by deliberate frugality, proof of their state of grace. . . . It was the triumph of principle over greed, and it had placed the whole family on a dais of pious superiority." Laura rebels against the puritanical Quakerism of her parents, moves to New York after local high school and boarding school, becomes a photographer, and marries.

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One might say she married, at twenty, in a fit of absentmindedness. "It did not occur to her that she could say no . . . she didn't want to sound prudish. The sexual revolution swirled around them like guerrilla warfare, libidinal attacks in the streets, the subways, the singles bars." Yet what better reasons would there have been than "Nat's beguiling honesty, . . . the fact that he loved her . . . and that he made

her laugh." But if the beginning of this marriage was casual, its end was even more so. He has some casual, non-emotional affairs; she has one in retaliation, they have a little boy, Sammy, and one day, without having had a spat, Laura walks out. When her lease is up, she moves in, equally casually, with another man, Ward, a successful lawyer, the son of a Jewish furrier in Chicago, and a Unitarian

mother from western Massachusetts—a background right out of "The De-WASping of America's Power Elite." "Ward had said, 'Move in with me. All mod cons, twenty-four-hour doorman, great sex.' . . . It was a great relief. *What she wanted for Sammy was a sense of place, of certainty.*" What a strange way to achieve this—particularly when Laura refuses to marry Ward! "What held her back was the

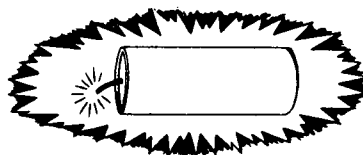
fear that she would fail at this one too."

The novel's action takes place during one month of July, for which Ward had rented a rambling house by the sea in Maine that he and Laura share with Laura's sister and brother-in-law and their two daughters. The novel starts and ends with a perilous boat ride; through fog at the start, through choppy waves at the end. Sammy has refused to put on his life jacket in resentment of the man his mother lives with. He falls overboard; his mother jumps in after him, manages to find and rescue him, and she and Ward succeed in restoring Sammy's breathing. There is an implication, though no certainty, that after this crisis, and an earlier one provoked by Laura's having invited her ex-husband to spend a weekend in the house by the sea, Laura and Ward will marry. A positive note—but still an ambiguous one. Whether that marriage, should it occur, will give Sammy the sense of place, of certainty that his mother wishes for him must remain doubtful.

A sense of place, of certainty, and of upper-class Wasp self-confidence is vividly recalled in a flashback to the 16-year-old Laura's stay with her grandmother at her house in Bar Harbor. The house had been built in 1892. "It was shingle, with white trim, and two round towers at the ends, each with a round window. Big-windowed, high-ceilinged and large, it presumed an endless supply of servants and fuel . . . Things had not been changed for decades." It is only during that few weeks' stay that we find Laura happy; happiest when she works with her grandmother in her beautiful garden. Laura "wanted to possess something the way Granny did; she wanted to possess all the knowledge and the labor and the sights and smells of a garden. She wanted to look over it, as Granny did, with an air of calm dominion." The author leaves no doubt about the roots of Granny's air of calm dominion: they were in the world from which Laura's father "had deliberately removed himself . . . 'a town house on East 88th Street, Chapin, and coming-out parties.'" Laura "wondered if her grandmother minded that Laura's father had abandoned her serene and self-contained ship."

Roxana Robinson does not seem to wish for a return to that ship anymore than Robert Christopher or Jonathan Yardley. She lives with the knowledge that the house in Bar Harbor has burned down, shortly after Granny's death. Yet her masterful novel expresses a search for the kind of serenity her Granny possessed, and for which we have not yet found an equivalent after crashing the gates. □

Help us explode myths about Catholics!



Harvard historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Sr. once said that prejudice against the Roman Catholic Church is "the deepest bias in the history of the American people."

There is a tenacious myth among Americans generally that says Catholics are stupid, lazy, and superstitious.

Among fundamentalists there is that whopper of a myth that the Pope is the Anti-Christ and the Catholic Church is the Whore of Babylon, a hideous and many-tentacled pagan cult.

Among evangelicals there is a more sedate myth that Catholicism is a numbing religion riddled with dead formulas, empty rituals, and rigid prohibitions — a legalistic religion which fears the Bible and freezes out the grace of Christ.

Among secular humanists there is a politically handy myth that only Catholics regard abortion as murder, and that no one in his right mind who is not a Catholic would object to legalized abortion.

Secular humanists also purvey the myth that Catholics call abortion murder because they are puritanical and hate sex. Moreover, it is said, Catholics opposed to abortion don't really care about the sanctity of human life, as they claim to, because they are utterly indifferent to the threat to innocent life posed by nuclear weapons.

Then, there is the abiding myth that Catholics can't really explain why they are Catholic, that when Catholics are challenged their convictions crumble, and hence Catholics fear democracy, the open circulation of ideas, and freedom of religion.

Oddly, myths about Catholicism have even worked their way into the Catholic Church her-

self. Hence, among modernist Catholics there is a corrosive myth that Catholics who believe in the creeds and the Church's magisterium are both narrow-minded ignoramuses who self-righteously cling to the letter of the law and mean-spirited bigots who fear Protestants and fail in charity toward their neighbors.

This is an intimidating syllabus of myths — but happily, each myth is inaccurate and erroneous, and each one is disproved by the existence and insistence of the NEW OXFORD REVIEW. Actually, we at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW don't waste much time fretting about the myth-makers; rather, we are content to be living witnesses to the truth about Catholicism and the falsehood of all the myths.

The established media have duly noted us: *Time* finds us "conservative" (true enough, when it comes to doctrine, morality, and ecclesial authority), *Newsweek* says we're "cheeky" (probably more true than we realize), and *The New York Times* thinks our editorial policy is "curious" (probably very true, at least from the *Times's* perspective).

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MAZES

Hugh Kenner/North Point Press/320 pp. \$22.95

Jeffrey Hart

The great literary critics are themselves great prose writers, a fact that upon reflection should come as no surprise. One thinks of Samuel Johnson, Coleridge, Hazlitt, Arnold, T. S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis, Lionel Trilling, and, a close call but making it, Edmund Wilson. When you listen to even one of their sentences you enter distinctive worlds of the sensibility. Recall that Dante, near the beginning of his poem, greeted the shades of the five greatest classical writers, and then said, "And I was a sixth among them." Hugh Kenner is among the absolutely first-rate literary critics adduced above.

I will mention here his huge achievement, *The Pound Era*, not to talk about it directly now but as a way to begin talking about Kenner's style. In its own way it is Poundian. As in the *Cantos* at their best, each word as it comes along is new. (*Make It New*, Pound wrote, and Kenner does so.) The words he uses are almost always familiar ones, but he uses them in a new way. "Irony, that catless grin, does hover these days." "Mrs. Stowe's famous eleven-kleenex tract" (referring to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*). "Ike, 'driven to the edge, almost, of a thought,' the Keystone Caesar and our last funny president." "A cognitive Black Hole." "No canvas-climber of Drake's" knew that he was living in the Age of Shakespeare. But Shakespeare had the "power to invest the air with forms." "After Mussolini had removed Haile and abolished slavery."

Like Pound's verse, Kenner's prose obliges the reader to slow down, take notice, think again. The edges of the words connect in new ways. Neither Pound's nor Kenner's style is by any means exclusively about "things" in a literal sense, but both styles make ideas have the kinetic quality of things. Such a repossession of the world must have been very much in the air in the 1920s, the Pound Era, as when John Crowe Ransom set himself the task of recognizing the "world's body" as over against Hegelian Oxford's *Weltgeist*, even as the young Hemingway was writing such sentences as "In the bed of the river there were pebbles and

Jeffrey Hart's latest book is *Acts of Recovery: Essays on Culture and Politics* (University Press of New England).

boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels."

Mazes is a collection of now suddenly no longer fugitive pieces, book reviews, talks, essays, obituaries, the whole held together—like the *Cantos*—by the distinctive style that is the expression of Kenner's distinctive intelligence. The book is highly "readable," but you cannot read it quickly. Its sentence by sentence freshness commands your alert attention. As Lionel Trilling once wrote in connection with Santayana, "That smile of Parmenides made me think."

Kenner celebrates, for example, a sensibility somewhat kindred to his own in a remarkable review of Guy Davenport's *The Geography of the Imagination* (1981), a book which I have just picked up the phone to order. Did you wonder about Poe's phrase, the "perfumed sea"? Davenport informs us that "classical ships never left sight of land, and could smell orchards on shore." Did you wonder about Poe's "Nicean barks of yore"? Well, wonder no more. Davenport knows that Mark Antony's fleet was built in the city of Nice. Everyone "knows" Grant Wood's famous painting "American Gothic." Only everyone doesn't know it.

She is a product of the ages, this modest Iowa farm wife: she has the hairdo of a medieval madonna, a Reformation collar, a Greek Cameo, a nineteenth-century pinafore.

Martin Luther put her a step behind her husband; John Knox squared her shoulders; the stock-market crash of 1929 put that look in her eyes.

And there is much more reading of the iconography of this famous but until now unknown painting, with Kenner delighting in the act of seeing brought about by Davenport.

Some of the funniest things I have ever read are in this book. I don't suppose the late Richard Ellman thought Kenner's treatment of his "definitive" Joyce biography funny at all, but the rest of us will find it hilarious. Kenner shows that much in the book rests upon a foundation of, new term, "Irish Facts," which means Dublin inventions, or, in someone else's word, factoids.

Kenner's hoax review of a book called *The Poetry of Richard Milhous Nixon* is one of the funniest things ever written. "Nixon's" poetry consists of quotations from the Watergate transcripts, placed in pseudo-poetic lines, and surrounded by commentary that burlesques academic criticism, as in:

Mixed Emotions

I still have mixed emotions on it.
I don't know.
I don't know.
I have been one way one time
one way another.

Kenner "reviews" this "verse": "Here are no sonnets for an idle hour. Stark, terse, hard-bitten, cunningly disequibrated—tiptoe, in fact, on the needle-point of our century's anguish—these poems speak to and for the thwarted Tamburlaine that lurks in the psyche of urban America. Make no mistake, ours are not easy times. Old certainties dissolve. On every front—ecology, government, Russia, Raquel Welch—we face both ways while poet Nixon speaks for all of us. (Much that is delivered at the Modern Language Association is just as funny, though unintentionally so.) Kenner concludes this delicious "review":

Who
the hell
are they after?
They
are
after
us.

"Face to face with such quiet mastery, one is startled to learn from the jacket that this is Mr. Nixon's first book of poetry. . . . Here is no footloose vagrant, no sandalled unshaven bum. Unlike Homer or Allen Ginsberg, Mr. Nixon, a civil servant, is content to reside 'in Washington, D.C. with his wife Pat.'" (This last must be a joke about the legend of Wallace Stevens, "insurance executive, Hartford.")

Remember Sputnik? Kenner:

At Cape Canaveral our Germans rushed onto the pad a grapefruit-sized satellite atop a Viking rocket; not big, but, you see, superior technology. It fell over the instant Mission Control lit the match: "IKE'S SPUTNIK FLOPNIK." For a while nothing Western seemed to get off the ground. As bonfires glowed round the base of a cartoonist's Washington Monument, the wino in the foreground confided, "It'll never get off the ground."

Among many other things, this book is, to coin a phrase, a stitch.

And there is also much serious literary criticism. If it was the Pound Era, for example, it was also the Eliot Era, and Kenner knows precisely why:

And truly, in 1950, certain things seemed altogether clear. There was a major poet living, T. S. Eliot, who had recently finished his major poem, "Four Quartets," and Eliot had created not only a body of work but a milieu. In the process of reintroduc-

ing living speech, Eliot had made a seventeenth-century manner accessible, and Donne's way, Marvell's way, shored up the procedures of substantial second-level poets like Tate and Ransom.

Of the enormous amount of writing on George Orwell, Kenner's essay, "The Politics of the Plain Style," is quite simply the best (and I am well aware, for example, of Trilling's essay).

The Kenner style is capable again and again of exceptional eloquence. Dorothy Pound's "hand turning pages pauses at the lynx-chorus in Canto 79."

We have lain here amid kalicanthus and sword-flower

The heliads are caught in wild rose-vine
The smell of pine mingles with rose leaves . . .

O lynx, be many
of spotted fur and sharp ears.
O lynx, have your eyes gone yellow,
with spotted fur and sharp ears?

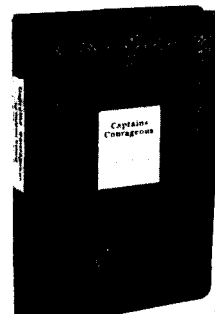
"That chorus was for me.' He had so inscribed it, having typed it in the evening in Pisa on the medic's typewriter. . . . She died in mid-December 1973, having outlived her husband six weeks more than a year. A time has gone with her. Will she have a biography? No more, possibly, than Homer's Helen. When an age goes, our way to understand it goes with it. The rest is reminiscent fragment and fiction."

This reviewer's own prose falls silent after such things. None of us really wants to be seen playing tennis against Ellsworth Vines. □

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THE NAMIBIA SPECTATOR



SWAPO MEET

by Denis Boyles

*Went to a dance the other night;
Everybody there was there . . .
I said over and over and over again,
This dance is gonna be a drag.*
—Dave Clark Five

I went to Namibia for the elections there, to see what they had been calling the last colony in Africa dance the twist of freedom. Namibia, much of which looks like the set of *Dune*, is a sparsely populated former colony that Germany lost to South Africa in the First World War, and that South Africa lost in the linked agreement put together by former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Chester A. Crocker that swapped independence for Namibia for the removal of Cubans from Angola.

I wasn't the only person who went to Namibia for the elections. More than 1,500 journalists showed up, joining the 7,500 members of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) sent to monitor the voting, most of which was taking place at U.S. expense. At best, the whole episode brought Namibia a Warhol-sized chunk of celebrity. After all, when the territory was called South West Africa, everybody could guess where the place was, but now that it's plain Namibia, it has slipped off the edge of cognitive geography and lies someplace in the mist.

The election pitted the South West Africa People's Organization, or SWAPO, against the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), a multiracial amalgam of anti-apartheid, moderate parties representing tribes ranging from the country's 75,000 whites to the much more numerous Kavangos and Bushmen. SWAPO represents the interests of the majority Ovambo tribe, but it has global fame and its own bulky politburo; the organization has been called by the U.N. "the sole and authentic representatives" of the Namibian people—a suggestion that has caused some distress not only to the whites, but also to the Herero, Nama, Bushmen, Damara, Kavango, Caprivians, Tswana, and other tribes who also call Namibia

Denis Boyles is the author of African Lives (Weidenfeld & Nicolson) and Man Eaters Motel, an anecdotal history of East Africa forthcoming from Grove Weidenfeld.

home. Part of the U.N.'s charm, of course, is that it can't tell a Herero from a sole and authentic representative of Hereros.

The Hereros do not have that problem. Like many of Namibia's 1.3 million inhabitants, they are dominated by the Ovambo, whose homeland stretches far across the northern border into Angola. There are perhaps as many as 750,000 Ovambo in Namibia at any one time—maybe more during elections—and they are feared and mistrusted by the other tribes. Once, the Ovambo fought to gain tribal independence under the banner of the Ovambo People's Organization (OPO), the group that catapulted SWAPO's Communist leader, Sam Nujoma, to prominence. OPO's name was changed to the South West Africa People's Organization when it became apparent that OPO might indeed win independence for Ovamboland—a relatively fertile but impoverished and entirely overpopulated district—but lose the rest of South West Africa, which is arid (the Kalahari and Namib deserts conspire to relieve much of the country of vegetation) but rich in uranium and diamonds and severely underpopulated. Most outside observers thought that SWAPO's 20-year guerrilla war fought against South Africa would have won the hearts and minds of 80 to 90 percent of the Namibians. In fact, the secretary general of the Organization of African Unity, Salim Ahmed Salim, a Tanzanian, arrived in Windhoek ten days before the voting was scheduled to start and threatened that the OAU would consider invalid—"or at least questionable"—any election not won by SWAPO.

After all, Namibia's recent history has followed the trite pattern established by other African nations, where colonial governments, faced with the inevitability of change but still unwilling to permit the growth and development of moderate political organizations, created power vacuums that were quickly filled by not-so-moderate paramilitary organizations. Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, these tribal-based groups were usually characterized as

"nationalist" groups, since few outside Africa can distinguish the members of one tribe from another. Further, these groups were often led by a charismatic figure, such as SWAPO's Mr. Nujoma; they fomented violent opposition as a matter of policy, and when the movement toward decolonization finally reached its apex in each colony, those creating the most disruptive mischief had to be seen as the logical inheritors of power.

It was from their northern bases that SWAPO was able to direct most of the guerrilla warfare that only ended last spring, after Nujoma had tried to accelerate the democratic process by sending thousands of armed troops over the border from Angola. During the entire history of the struggle, however, despite enthusiastic support from the U.N. and from sympathizers abroad, SWAPO had little influence outside its own tribal area except where Ovambo miners and agricultural workers were able to create satellite constituencies. Nujoma had alienated many Namibians with his torture-and-murder camps—he once had his own wife violently interrogated—and with his neo-Kampuchean disgust at Namibians who had been given non-SWAPO educations at schools and colleges.

I got a good sense of SWAPO's limited appeal when I followed the campaign from the dry, volcanic deserts in the south to the grassy plains of the north. In Keetmanshoop, a south-central farming community, SWAPO predicted 25,000 would show up for a Nujoma-led rally, but the only spectators were the three or four thousand Ovambo regulars that were customarily transported around the country on behalf of SWAPO. Nujoma left the rally in a huff, but the supporters of SWAPO's arch-rival party, the DTA, were overjoyed, and staged an impromptu rally of their own to celebrate their enemy's embarrassment and their relief.

A drive through the settlements occupied by Ovambo workers told a different story. There, the green, blue, and red flag of SWAPO floated over every house, and the kids playing in the streets wore SWAPO T-shirts. In the southern and central districts, the cam-

paign had a festive air, but the farther north I traveled, the more intense and serious the issue of a SWAPO victory became. Rumors began filtering into the capital that SWAPO would revert to warfare if it lost the election. DTA supporters, meanwhile, distributed ridiculous pseudo-SWAPO pamphlets containing obvious disinformation and played other collegiate-level dirty tricks, while SWAPO elements lived up to their reputation by intimidating whole neighborhoods of voters. For its part, UNTAG strove earnestly to conduct a reasonably fair election, though U.N. workers later told me that none of their security precautions were ultimately effective. By the time voting ended on November 11, more than 90 percent of the eligible voters had cast their ballots. In Ovamboland, the figure was very close to 100 percent.

The election returns were announced with unexpected speed. By the night of November 13, all the districts south of Ovamboland had reported. Although SWAPO had taken some of the precincts where Ovambo miners and workers were numerous enough to make a difference, outside Ovamboland fewer than a third of the voters supported SWAPO, while nearly half supported DTA. Splinter parties picked up the rest.

The next morning, the Ovambo districts came in: SWAPO had taken nearly 200,000 votes in Ovamboland, while the DTA had taken exactly 9,000. That local landslide was sufficient to give SWAPO a 57 percent majority in the country as a whole and a leading role in the 72-seat constituent assembly charged with writing the constitution for an independent Namibia.

The SWAPO victory was impressive enough to warrant a noisy celebration in the streets of Windhoek, where SWAPO supporters and UNTAG workers in U.N. vehicles drove up and down the Kaiserstrasse honking their horns and giving the clenched-fist SWAPO salute. It was also enough to give Sam Nujoma an opportunity to say at a post-election press conference that he would not oppose the establishment of a one-party state. □

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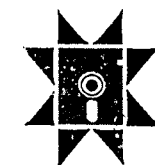
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CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 9)

Swallowing the Abortion Pill

I take umbrage at Charlotte Low Allen's article "The Mysteries of RU-486" (*TAS*, October 1989), which I'm sorry to say is pregnant with scientific non-facts, half-truths, and inaccuracies. It is unusual of your otherwise esteemed paper to parent such poor quality journalism. Just to mention a few of those blemishes:

- "Fetuses" become fetuses after the first eight weeks of pregnancy; before that they are embryos, blastocysts, or just plain fertilized eggs, none of which exhibit fingers or toes.

- Ms. Allen writes that 12,000 French women have used the pill. That number, according to health officials, is closer to 30,000.

- The chemical structure of RU-486 does not have any correlation with DES, the infamous morning sickness pill. In fact, Dr. Baulieu, the developer of RU-486, at the recent Lasker Awards Presentation in New York City (at which this reader was present) discussed this myth at length to the satisfaction of his more scientific peers. This is entirely a myth dragged up by some media hack.

- The "rabbit" studies to which the author alludes—claiming to cause birth defects—are also imaginary. To the best of my knowledge (see *JAMA*, 10/6/89; p. 1812), the studies regarding birth defects were done on monkeys, and their offspring exhibited no defects at all, even when exposed to high doses before birth.

- "Mifepristone" is the generic name of the drug, *not* the trade name (oh come on already).

- There is a population explosion (see China).

Mysteries indeed! What happened to the fact checkers that day? Moonlighting at the *New Yorker*?

—Gretchen Berger
New York, New York

Charlotte Low Allen replies:

I was using the term "fetus" generically (as in "fetal protection policy"), but, yes, at eight weeks, it's a fetus, at seven weeks just an embryo. At seven weeks, an unborn has hands and feet, although it is true that fingers and toes don't appear until a week later. At the time I wrote the article, only 12,000 French women had taken RU-486, although the number has increased to more than 20,000 by now, perhaps as many as 30,000.

Unfortunately, the chemical structure of RU-486 does bear a striking resemblance to that of DES, and also to progesterone, the female hormone that facilitates implantation by trigger-

ing the thickening of the uterine wall. Indeed, RU-486's molecular "backbone," its three-dimensional structure, is virtually identical to that of DES. RU-486 and DES do their job in a chemically similar fashion, competing with progesterone to bond with progesterone-receptor hormones. DES was thought to be a sort of superior synthetic form of progesterone, while RU-486, by usurping progesterone's place, prevents it from doing its work. In contrast to DES, the abortion pill may prove to be perfectly safe, and it may be comforting to know that Dr. Baulieu is assuring audiences that this is so. But no long-term testing has been done.

The rabbit tests were real enough, and Baulieu cites the research in the *JAMA* article and a virtually identical article in the September 22, 1989, issue of *Science* magazine. He declares that no one has been able to duplicate the rabbit results on rats or monkeys but cites no written studies.

And yes, I confused trade and generic names; RU-486 is the drug's trade name, while mifepristone is the generic.

The Chinese government certainly believes there is a population explosion and makes life highly unpleasant for parents who want their children to grow up with siblings. Those who advocate abortion as a form of population control should be honest with themselves and others, however: they are not the slightest bit "pro-choice."

Bad Reference

Re: William H. Nolte's review of Frederick R. Karl's *William Faulkner: American Writer* (*TAS*, November 1989):

This reader found it both interesting and ironic that in reviewing Frederick R. Karl's *William Faulkner: American Writer*, Professor Nolte committed some of the same transgressions of which he accused Professor Karl. In commenting upon the length of Karl's tome, for example, Nolte stated, "... of its 600,000-plus words, at least 300,000 are not only unnecessary but actually deleterious." Yet, surely a book review is not the place for the reviewer to digress on his own "once upon a time" trip to Oxford, Mississippi, or upon his recollection of an Oxford druggist's view that racial integration would not come to William Faulkner's hometown. While this information might be a part of the total Faulkner fabric, its sole purpose in this review is simply to allow the reviewer to insert his own bit of "Oxford Remembered."

One gathers that Professor Nolte thinks that Mr. Karl did not do justice to William Faulkner, whom Nolte identifies as "my hero." Few writers have done justice to the genius from Oxford, but I do not think Mr. Nolte's

book review has aided the cause.

—Bobbie Stevens Johnson
*Humanities Reference Librarian
The University of Texas
at Arlington
Arlington, Texas*

William H. Nolte replies:

Ms. Johnson questions the propriety of my remarks about the Oxonians with whom I visited thirty-one years ago, and evidently believes that I have performed a disservice to the memory of Faulkner. I have no complaint with her complaint. I liked the people I met in Oxford, and I am obviously a great admirer of Faulkner's fiction—no matter what shortcomings he may have had as a man.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Rebecca Larche Moreton of Oxford for correcting my faulty memory concerning the banker who was so kind to me. His name was not Gilchrist, as I recalled it, but Dr. Christopher Longest, who became president of the First National Bank of Oxford after retiring from the University of Mississippi, where he was a professor of Latin and chairman of the Department of Modern Languages. Only in the deep South! The Christopher Longest Lectures Fund was established in 1960, the year before Dr. Longest's death. He was 87 when he died, which means he was 84 when I met him. Even though I erred in recalling his name, I nonetheless cherish the memory of the hour or two I spent in his company. I have no doubt that his ghost will forgive the slip in my memory.

I'm a Mills Man

In your August issue Professor Robert Ferrell, in a review of a book on Dean Rusk, called Mills College a "backwater school." My dictionary defines "backwater" as "isolated and backward." Mills is nothing of the kind.

Mills, founded in 1852, is one of the oldest colleges for women in the country and one of the most distinguished, a worthy example in the West of what Wellesley, Smith, and Mount Holyoke are in the East. It has a superior faculty of teacher-scholars, a highly qualified student body, a long record of skillful and dedicated administration, and a stunningly beautiful campus in Oakland.

Ferrell also calls Davidson a "poor boys' Princeton," an inaccurate characterization. . . . These remarks were inappropriate in an otherwise competent review.

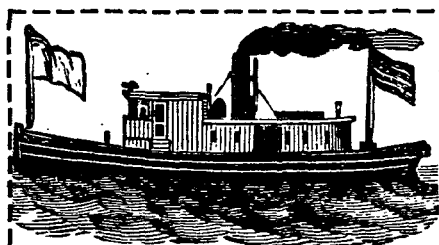
—Emery R. Walker, Jr.
Claremont, California

The editors mourn the death of former colleague Terry Krieger and send condolences to his splendid parents.

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CURRENT WISDOM

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In a magisterial autobiography, Mrs. Ann Richards, treasurer of the great state of Texas, brings us right to the maternity bed at the historic moment of her birth and a barnyard friend's demise:

I finally arrived at six the next morning.

Mama had gotten a neighbor woman to come in to cook supper for Daddy that night, but the neighbor woman couldn't kill the chicken that she was supposed to cook. My Daddy would be getting home any time now and something had to be done; there's no such thing as maternity leave when you're poor, not even for a moment. My Mama lay on the birthing bed, only hours after I was born, and wrung that chicken's neck so that Daddy would have supper when he got home.

[from: Straight From the Heart: My Life in Politics and Other Places

by Ann Richards with Peter Knobler,
Simon and Schuster, \$18.95]

Washington Post

During the solemnities of a Carter Administration reunion (held, as luck would have it, on the tenth anniversary of the fall of our Tehran Embassy), Governor Neil Goldschmidt of Oregon reveals himself to be a stand-up comedian of uncommon gifts:

"President Carter, you chose the honest, the caring, the committed to serve with you. If we were average or good or great, we obeyed the law and the high standards you set. After the recent eight-plus recent years of greed and indifference to human suffering and selling of the government in office, it makes every day of your administration like a sabbath of celebration."

[November 6, 1989]

City on a Hill

(University of California, Santa Cruz)

A young professional caters to the gourmets of Santa Cruz, California:

What's it like working at Burrito Express? She makes a lot of new friends, she says. It's high stress. But it's like a family there, a weird family. You'll see her there, standing in the window, smelling like beef. "Can I take your order?" Yolanda is the one with no hair. . . .

If Yolanda likes you, you'll get a fat burrito, really fat. That means she wants you. So eat it and know. Yolanda doesn't have too much trouble scamming. "I don't really know how to get men permanently," she says. "But I can get them for a few days." It's getting difficult, though, since the meat and the cheese are weighed every day now in an attempt to make the size of burritos more consistent. But lust will always prevail.

[November 2, 1989]

Free Lance-Star

(Fredericksburg, Virginia)

Rebecca J. Ochs, doubtless a doctoral candidate at Harvard University, pens a missive to her hometown gazette:

I think that the news is too depressing for some people.

One reason is reporters write this information to take up space in the newspaper. People hear of deaths and get all worked up over a death of someone they don't know. Sure readers like to be informed of the happenings in the world and to be entertained, but why does the whole city or state, depending on the newspaper, have to know about funerals and weddings of other people?

For example, it scares us when people die in car accidents—to the point that we don't even want to go out on the road, thinking that some crazy man is drunk and is going to hit us.

Another example is if reporters think some other country is going to bomb us then we might stay inside our houses all day thinking that a bomb is going to hit us. Although after a few weeks it was all a waste of time, because the reporters thought wrong.

Of course, everything in the newspaper is not negative. But if a reporter is not sure of himself or he thinks that what happened that day does not fit the peoples' likings, he should keep it out of the newspaper and into the business that it belongs to.

In conclusion, I think that reporters should be more sensitive to the feelings of the people who read the newspaper and stop writing stories just to make money.

[November 7, 1989]

Newsweek

A. Bartlett Giamatti, the late baseball commissioner, elucidates baseball in the kind of professorial flumdidle that makes just and enlightened souls yearn to burn every American university to the ground:

Baseball is counterpoint: stability vying with volatility, tradition with the quest for a new edge, ancient rhythms and ever-new blood—an oft-told tale, repeated in every game in every season, season after season. Repetition within immutable lines and rules. If this is the tale told, who tells it? Clearly, the players who enact it thereby also tell it. But the other true tellers of the narrative are those for whom it is played. If baseball is a narrative, an epic of exile and return [to home plate], a vast, communal poem about separation, loss, and the hope for reunion—if baseball is a Romance Epic—it is finally told by the audience. It is the Romance Epic of homecoming America sings to itself.

[November 6, 1989]

Modesto Bee

Addressing members of the National Newspaper Association, Dr. Ted Turner of the Turner Broadcasting System divulges his latest findings in the fields of world history and personal growth:

"When Moses went up on the mountain, there were no nuclear weapons, there was no poverty. Today, the commandments wouldn't go over. Nobody around likes to be commanded. Commandments are out."

[October 27, 1989]

New York Times

In his valedictory interview with Mr. R. W. Apple, Jr., James Reston proves that his retirement came about a decade ago, which was about two decades too late:

But Mr. Reston conceded that Ronald Reagan "could be elected today," despite what he described as "the damned disgrace" of Mr. Reagan's and Mr. Bush's economic policies. He added:

"If George Bush, the morning after the California disaster, had said—'It took an earthquake to wake me up. I should never have said what I did, because I couldn't know what was going to happen. We've got good information in Washington, but we haven't got that pipeline to the Lord. We're going to raise taxes—the country would have raised its arms in applause.'"

[November 5, 1989]

Washington Post Book World

As the Republican ascendancy continues, the democratic fires abate even in the populist bosom of book reviewer Robert Sherrill:

Morris's account of the Nixon-Douglas campaign shows that under properly poisoned conditions, it *can* happen here. Six out of 10 Californians voted to send Nixon to the U.S. Senate in 1950, just as six out of 10 Americans voted to re-elect him president in 1972. Morris recalls that when Nixon was Ike's running mate in 1952 and disgruntled Republicans leaked details of his \$16,000 slush fund, Nixon counter-attacked by claiming the leak had come from communists and that the fund was set up to save taxpayers' money. This was the message he shoveled from the back of a train going up the West Coast, and, Morris tells us, "Nowhere, from the hot Central Valley through the neat, cloudy, small cities of Oregon, would he face an audience that did not cheer his claim of smears and savings, did not accept his distorting view of public morality and political motives, did not scorn and when the chance came even punish his opponents. . . ."

That's the baffling thing that our biographers have to keep coming back to: an awful lot of people like Tricky Dick.

[November 12, 1989]

New York Times

Mr. M. Steven Fish, a doctoral candidate in political science at Stanford University, reveals the derisive quality of mind being engaudded with New Age learning at the Palo Alto playground:

Should the Berlin Wall be demolished? Mikhail Gorbachev's willingness to address the issue in his visit to West Germany is likely to raise hopes that the wall could soon come down. But we should heed the Soviet leader's words at a Bonn news conference yesterday. "The wall was raised in a concrete situation and was not dictated only by evil intentions," he said. "The wall can disappear only when those conditions that created it fall away."

He's right.

The wall has played an important role in preserving the peace, and continues to do so. Tearing it down now could give conservative elements an issue to use against Mr. Gorbachev and his fellow reformers.

Condemning the wall is easy and safe: no one likes it, least of all its East German and Soviet creators, for whom it stands as a symbol of failure and impotence. . . .

Gloating over the upheavals and changes that are transforming the Communist world weakens Eastern-bloc proponents of reform, who are locked in battle with conservative adversaries. By joining his predecessors in calling for its demise, President Bush does nothing to erode the foundations on which the Berlin Wall stands.

[June 16, 1989]

Washington Post

Mr. Michael Kinsley, still playing courier to the Republic's neurotic Liberal clerisy:

Conservatives, having said the collapse of communism would not happen, now claim credit for it. America's policy of containment undoubtedly hastened the day. But the party line that containment was abandoned in the 1970s and had to be reinvented by Reagan is mostly myth. And communism obviously deserves more credit than it has gotten for being able to produce its own collapse.

[November 17, 1989]

New York Times Book Review

In reviewing a new biography of our fallen leader, the poet R. W. Apple takes English to the outer limits of aesthetic improvisation:

Some will regret the absence of psycho-historical techniques in this book. I do not—not only because I have little confidence in them, but also because I wonder whether any technique can fully explain the crippling lack of self-confidence, the hatreds, the self-obsession, the sheer awfulness of Richard Nixon's personality.

[November 12, 1989]

ALL- STARS



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